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Threepence.

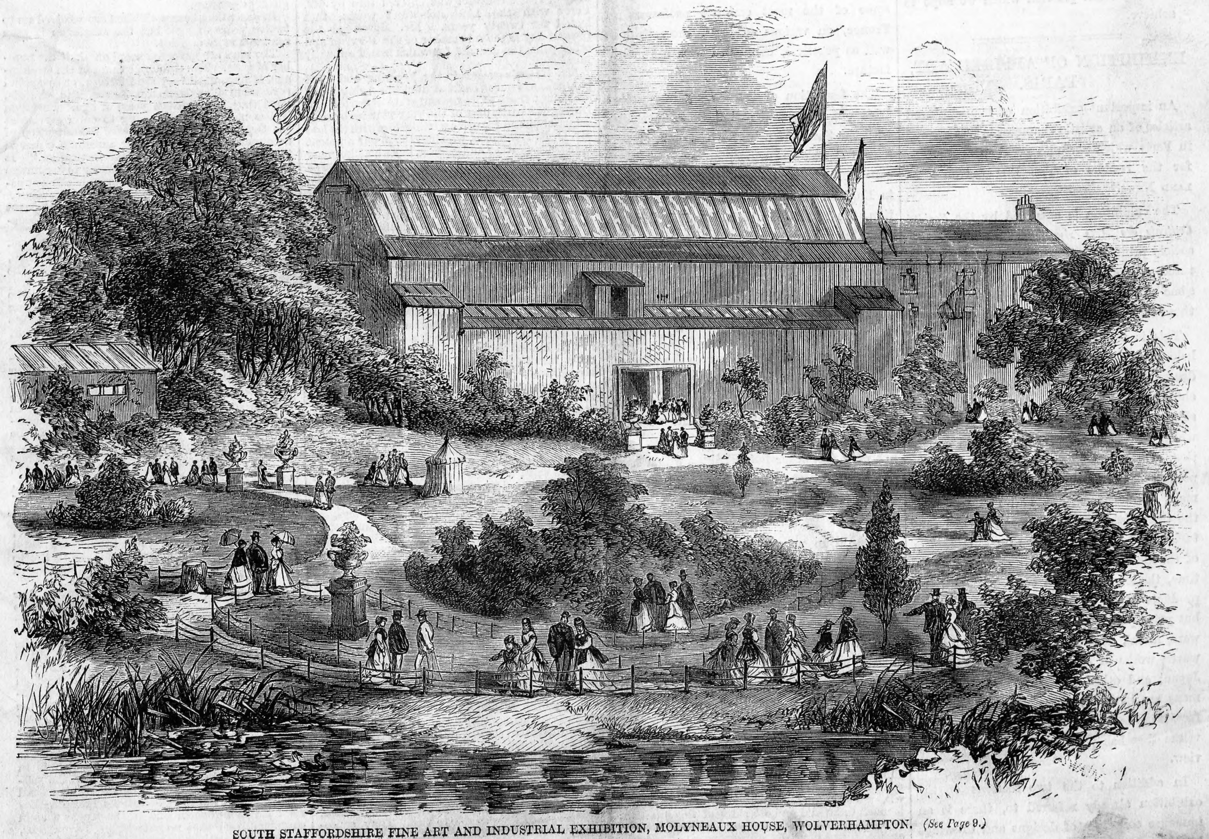
OUR PROSPECTUS.

The Projectors of The Illustrated Midland News, believing that the people of this great and thriving District will appreciate and value a Pictorial Newspaper, have determined upon producing one that shall be worthy of general support. It has long been felt by the Proprietors that the confining of this class of Journalistic Literature to London is an anomaly in these days of widely-circulated Provincial Newspapers, and they hope to establish an Illustrated Paper in the country which shall hold, amongst Provincial Journals, as high a position as *The Illustrated London News* enjoys in London.

The Illustrated Paper for the Provinces will be devoted chiefly to the interests of the Midland Counties. The important Local and General News of the day will be carefully narrated, and incidents of note will form subjects for Pictorial representation. Artists of high repute have been engaged, and will be on the spot to proceed at once to such scenes as may be selected for Illustration. The Illustrated Midland News will not only be a First-class Newspaper; it will be a Pictorial Record of Local, General, and Foreign Events, which, bound up into a volume at the close of each year, will form an interesting and entertaining Table Book.

The Arts and Manufactures of Birmingham and the Potteries will find in The Illustrated Midland News an exponent and an exhibitor of New Designs and Inventions; the Mining Operations of Staffordshire and Derbyshire will afford many subjects for useful and interesting Drawings; Nottingham and its Lace, Coventry and its Ribbons, Worcester and its Porcelain, will receive special attention; whilst the Rural Districts of Warwickshire, Gloucestershire, Shropshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, and Oxfordshire will present opportunities for artistic work which will be found attractive not only in the Midlands, but throughout the United Kingdom. The Architectural Beauties and Antiquarian Treasures of Local Towns and Cities will be drawn upon for contributions to the pictorial folio, and the Proprietors of The Illustated Midland News will spare no expense nor exertion to make the Paper a reflex of the enterprise, intelligence, and progress of these famous Midland Counties; whilst an intercommunication of intelligence will be kept up with France, Germany, and America, by means of special Art Correspondents and Agents.

In no sense a Political organ, The Illustrated Midland News will leave Whigs and Tories, Conservatives and Liberals, to fight their battles in the recognised organs of their several parties. Questions of Religious doctrine will also be rigidly excluded from its pages. The ethics of social life will not, however, be disregarded; nor will the great industrial problems of the day be neglected; but The Illustrated Midland News will be rather "a companion, guide, philosopher, and friend," than a public censor, or dictator: it will be a gossip rather than a preacher, striving to blend wisdom with



SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE FINE ART AND INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION, MOLYNEAUX HOUSE, WOLVERHAMPTON. *(See Page 9.)*

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entertainment. With this view arrangements have been made for the publication of contributions from several popular writers, who will enliven and enrich the Paper with occasional Tales and Sketches.

Preferring to be judged by their work rather than by promises, the Editor and Proprietors of this new feature in Provincial Illustrated Journalism venture to invite attention to the first and succeeding numbers of THE ILLUSTRATED MIDLAND NEWS.

With our prospectus fairly before the world, we now present the first result of our efforts to fulfil its promises.

No newspaper is launched without much trouble, anxiety and expense; but an Illustrated Journal is environed with difficulties which can hardly be over-estimated. We shall not weary the reader by detailing the obstacles which had to be overcome before this first number could go to press. Our triumph is represented in the publication itself; a large instalment of our reward has already come to us in kindly acts of encouragement.

In such measure as we shall deserve it, we confidently look for public sympathy and support. The work upon which we have entered is one of great importance, not only to ourselves, but also to the industrial districts of England. The want of an Illustrated Paper which should form some kind of index to the arts and manufactures of the Midlands more especially has long been unmistakeable. Only the expense and peculiar difficulties of such a publication can account for the absence of a first-class pictorial paper in the provinces until the present time.

"No. 1, Vol. I.," we inscribe upon this first sheet. How far the numerals shall extend and grow will depend upon the public appreciation of our efforts to deserve the high and important position which we hope to achieve.

EXHIBITION OF APPLIED ART, PARIS.

An important exhibition of manufactured articles of an artistic character is just opened in Paris which presents peculiar attractions for the readers of THE ILLUSTRATED MIDLAND NEWS.

The exhibition is arranged by the *Société Centrale des Arts Appliqués à l'Industrie*, a society principally composed of art manufacturers and artistic designers, and including some of the most eminent men belonging to those classes in France.

This is the third exhibition of the kind held by the Society in Paris. Like its predecessors, it comprises not only furniture, china, earthenware, metal-work, gold and silver work, and all kinds of manufactures in which art enters, but also a large loan collection. On the last occasion the retrospective portion consisted principally of china, enamels, *faïences*, furniture, and metal-work of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and was perhaps the finest collection of the kind ever made under one roof. This time, the loan collection consists of Oriental products of all kinds, ancient and modern, but principally the former: china, earthenware, metal, enamel; carved, lacquered, and woven works of Egypt, Persia, India, China, Japan, and other countries, and the specimens are both numerous and excellent; in fact, it is the finest general collection of such works that has yet been exposed to public view.

In addition to the two sections of the exhibition already referred to, there is an immense collection of designs and drawings by the pupils of the various public Schools of Design in Paris and other parts of France, as well as by individual designers and artists, for every branch of manufacture, and it is scarcely necessary to remind our readers of the ability of the designers and art-manufacturers amongst our neighbours.

It should have been mentioned, in connection with art manufactures of the present day, that there are numerous examples of the productions of the past exhibited, as worthy to serve as models or studies for the artists and manufacturers of the present time.

The exhibition occupies the whole of the central court or garden of the *Palais de l'Industrie* in the Champs Elysées, as well as the great suite of rooms and gallery above, devoted to the annual exhibition of paintings and other works of art, and it may, therefore, as regards extent as well as for other and better reasons, be taken as a full and fair exposition of the condition of applied art in France. It is impossible in a first notice to enter much into particulars; we shall have ample opportunity of doing so, as the exhibition is to remain open till the 10th of November, if not longer.

In the meantime it is right to say a few more words about the Society itself. Although an entirely independent association, it has the countenance and aid of the government as well as of the municipal authorities, and one of the most important objects which it has in view is the foundation of a regular college, or high school, for students in applied art; for this purpose a considerable tract of ground has been purchased and, if circumstances favour the design, there is no reason why it should be long delayed. In the meantime the society has established a library and museum, freely open to all the world, and containing very valuable collections of books on art, of specimens of art manufacture of all kinds, and ancient designs for woven, embroidered, lace, and other work. In addition to these, there are courses of lectures delivered, gratis as regards the audience, by some of the most eminent professors of France, on various subjects, theoretical as well as practical, connected with art manufacture.

The formation of the Society in question arose out of avowed and honourable rivalry with the South Kensington Museum, or perhaps, to speak somewhat more exactly, it was called into being by the great efforts made in England since 1851 to further art education, the results of which, small as they are sometimes reckoned amongst ourselves, struck our neighbours who visited London in 1862 very forcibly. It would be ridiculous to pretend that the art designers of England have yet attained a high place in the world, but great progress has been made, and it is not surprising that our friends across the channel should exert themselves to maintain their old pre-eminence. We can only say, borrowing a French form of expression, that we trust each country will surpass the other, and not only that other but all those which have preceded them in applying the great principles of beauty of form and colour to objects of utility.

Those who may visit Paris will find the Library and Museum of the Society at No. 15, in the fine old Place Royale, near the Place de la Bastille, and we are confident that any earnest student from abroad will find there a courteous reception, and much to interest him.

FEES TO JURYMEN.—At an inquest at Wolverhampton the other day the coroner informed one of the jury, who had recently come from Somersetshire, that in Staffordshire no fees were allowed to juries. In Worcestershire, Somersetshire, and many other counties that might be mentioned, the rule is to present each juryman with a fee of one shilling after the inquest. There is much to be said on both sides of this question. If the expenditure of a shilling each would secure an intelligent jury, by all means give it them; but in the majority of cases the men who are selected for this important duty are the most ignorant and opinionated men of their class.

JOSIAH MASON.

The first portrait we have the pleasure of presenting to our readers is that of a Birmingham Manufacturer whose name has long and honourably been associated with the trade and commerce of the town, and will always be nobly identified with the two charitable institutions he has founded.

It is only lately that Josiah Mason's Almshouses and Orphanage at Erdington have been brought prominently into notice, by their transfer from the founder to trustees of the superannuated and orphans, for whose use they are intended. The transfer includes the buildings, valued at £60,000, together with upwards of £200,000 in freehold land —all now practically handed over to the Corporation of Birmingham for the benefit of the poor for ever. But few who were immediately concerned in it, knew of the good work that had been for some years going on, until the whole was completed, and three weeks ago passed into the hands of those who, now jointly with the founder, and entirely at his decease, are publicly responsible for its management.

Such a gift being made in the lifetime of the giver adds to its importance in no less degree than it proves the pure philanthropy of him who makes it.

Mr. Josiah Mason is a native of Kidderminster, where he was born February 23, 1795.

He comes of a respectable family. The inheritor of no other means of livelihood than indomitable industry and perseverance, he commenced life at the age of twelve by selling cakes and rolls about the streets.

The only member of his family who evinced any remarkable talent was his grandfather, and he became noted for certain mechanical contrivances which brought him much remunerative employment in different provincial towns.

Josiah Mason acquired practical knowledge of various trades, and in the course of a few years determined to leave Kidderminster, and seek his fortune in a wider field of energy and enterprise.

He came to Birmingham, and for some years was engaged in the jewellery and gilt toy trade. A favourable opportunity presenting itself for entering the business of split-ring making, he took advantage of it, and in 1823 succeeded Mr. Samuel Harrison, of Lancaster-street, Birmingham, the inventor of split key-rings, and from that time dates the large fortune of which he has made such generous use.

Mr. Mason speaks with enthusiasm of Mr. Harrison's skill as an ingenious mechanic, and mentions that most of the philosophical instruments used by Dr. Priestley were partly of his construction. During the latter years of Mr. Harrison's life many pleasant evenings were passed by Mr. Mason in his society. The conversation often reverted to the days of Priestley, Baskerville and the Birmingham riots. At one of these meetings Mr. Harrison gave Mr. Mason a steel pen of the kind he had made for Priestley, no doubt, in Mr. Mason's opinion, the first that were ever seen.

In 1829 Mr. Mason himself commenced making steel pens at the split-ring manufactory in Lancaster-street, for the notable James Perry of London.

The pens were so much improved and reduced in cost, that a contract was entered into by Mr. Perry with the Lancaster-street works, that lasted for twenty years. Mr. Mason at the present day is the sole maker of the Perryan and other pens, the demand for which is still annually increasing.

Mr. Mason's success in the key-ring and steel pen manufacture enabled him to bring that important trade to its present state of perfection. During the early part of the year 1842 he became acquainted, and formed a partnership, with the late Mr. G. R. Elkington, who had taken out a patent for electro-plating and gilding, but who, like many other patentees, required the assistance of a capitalist to mature his invention. Mr. Mason thought the electro-plating business a tolerably good investment for a few thousand pounds. Although at first he did not intend to devote his own time to the manufacture, wishing to employ himself entirely with the steel pen trade, yet the many difficulties which arose in connection with the new business, and the constant and unexpected drain it made upon his purse, had the effect of enlisting all his efforts in developing the invention of electro-plating and gilding. It was not, however, until after several years' hard work and investing an enormous sum of money, that a success was obtained for the articles now so well known as those of Elkington, Mason & Co.'s manufacture. It was a bold venture on Mr. Mason's part, for never were energy and talent more required to work out an important undertaking than in the case of the electro-plating, the promoters of which were as dissimilar in talent as any two men possibly could be. One result of Messrs. Mason & Elkington's indomitable perseverance and ingenuity, was to enable the latter gentleman to leave a large sum to his five sons, who now carry on the trade in Birmingham. The successful issue of their venture in the business of electro-plating has not only been the means of supplying poor orphans with a home at Erdington, but a large number of manufacturers at Birmingham and Sheffield, as well as in France, are making fortunes by the electro-plating and gilding trade. There can be no question but that this vast trade would have been lost to Birmingham had it not been for the boldness of Mr. Mason in risking his capital, at a time when not half-a-dozen persons had the slightest hope of the experiment being a successful one. At that period the mode of plating was by introducing a thin layer of soft solder between the thin rolled silver and the article to be plated. The new method was strongly but uselessly opposed by the soft-solder platers, who deemed the success of the innovation impossible.

In 1850 Mr. Alexander Parkes, of Birmingham, who was for many years the chief chemist and experimentalist retained by the firm of Elkington and Mason, took out a patent for effecting improvements in copper-smelting. The plan was thought well of by both Mr. Mason and Mr. Elkington, who were induced to visit Swansea for the purpose of seeking a suitable place for carrying-out Mr. Parkes' improvements. This, however, they were unable to find. They consequently went first to Llanelly and then to Pembrey with the same object in view. At Pembrey they found a London speculator had built a dock, and here Messrs. Mason and Elkington established one of the finest copper works in the world, more particularly as regarded provision for the health of their workmen. Pembrey at that time could boast only of a small public-house, used by sailors who had work at the dock, and of two or three poor straggling cottages. Now, thanks to the subject of our memoir and his partner, Pembrey is a flourishing town, with no traces of its former humble condition. Always evincing an anxious interest in educating their poorer fellow-creatures, Messrs. Mason and Elkington built at Pembrey a school (now too small) to accommodate between 400 and 500 children, efficiently conducted and superintended by Mr. Howard Elkington. The copper-smelting works are still carried on in the name of Mason and Elkington.

Mr. Mason has avoided any association with public affairs, and it was only on the failure of the Birmingham Banking Company that he consented to assist in forming a new bank, to repair if possible the losses accruing from the old concern. He became chairman of the Company, a position he still retains, taking very active interest in its welfare.

A detailed history of Mr. Mason's career would neccessarily be most interesting and instructive. Even in this brief sketch of his life, it is seen how from obscurity he has by his own exertions risen to a high position among his fellow men, all the more enviable for the means by which it has been attained, and for the spirit of truly christian charity that hallows it.

"Do deeds of love" is the chosen precept of Mr. Mason, and the one that has guided him through life. It is inscribed upon the principal entrance to the Orphanage, and is the text to be followed by all who are in authority in this admirable institution.

The munificence of the Birmingham Manufacturer naturally suggests allusion to Mr. Peabody's charitable gifts. It is remarkable that the two great benefactors are both within five days of the same age—both began humbly in life and have become wealthy through their own energy and industry, and both have distributed nearly a similar sum among the poor. Here however the similarity that so far exists between them ceases; Mr. Peabody having handed over his money to trustees to be applied to the relief of the indigent, as they might suggest, Mr. Mason having formed a plan of which every detail is his own, and established two institutions, which he has put into working order, and so provided for, that no other aid will ever be necessary for their permanent support.

The Almshouses in the village of Erdington are intended for the reception of forty-six female inmates; twenty only have been admitted during the past ten years; the building which formerly served as an Orphanage is now being converted to accommodate the twenty-six additional aged women.

These Almshouses and the new Orphanage are at some distance apart and form distinct institutions, the latter standing in its own grounds of thirteen acres in extent.

The aged women are received at the discretion of the founder. The admission of children to the Orphanage is fettered with one condition only, "that every child shall be under the age of nine and the legitimate child of poor parents both then dead." There is no other condition whatever, neither of position, country, nor religious persuasion.

In exceptional cases children are received up to twelve years of age, but the admission is then rendered more difficult.

The boys are never to exceed one-half the number of girls. The children remain in the Orphanage, if boys until they are fourteen, or by special permission a twelvemonth longer, and if girls, until they are eighteen years of age. Provision is also made for girls willing to enter service at the Orphanage "with the *bonâ fide* intention of becoming teachers, nurses, or assistants either in the Orphanage or in other like institution." It is, indeed, the desire of the Founder to encourage girls in this respect and thus provide efficient assistants for his own establishment and elsewhere.

The following clauses in the Trust Deed set forth the plan of education and religious instruction to be followed in the Orphanage:—

"The children who are admitted into the Orphanage shall be lodged, clothed, fed, maintained, educated, and brought up gratuitously, at the exclusive cost of the Orphanage income.

"Proper arrangements shall be made by the Trustees for the instruction of the children, having due regard to their respective ages and capacities in reading, writing, spelling, English grammar, arithmetic, geography, and history, and such other subjects of general and useful knowledge as may be, from time to time, directed or authorised by the Trustees, subject to the condition which the said Josiah Mason doth hereby declare to be fundamental, that no instruction in any language or grammar other than in the English language and English grammar shall be given to the children in the said Orphanage.

"And it is hereby declared to be the express wish and direction of the founder, that all the children shall be brought up in habits of industry, and that, as far as practicable, the girls be instructed in sewing, baking, cooking, washing, mangling, and in all ordinary household and domestic duties, and in other useful knowledge, with a view to their being fitted to become useful members of society in those positions in life to which it may please God to call them, and which He may give them talents worthily to fulfil.

"And, under the deep conviction that the fear of Almighty God is the beginning of all true wisdom, the said Josiah Mason doth hereby declare it to be his special desire and direction that the children shall be carefully instructed in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and taught to love, reverence, and obey the doctrines and precepts therein graciously revealed, and, through the Divine blessing upon the labours of those engaged in their instruction, the words of the Apostle may be addressed with truth to every child who shall have been brought up in the Orphanage, 'From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus;' provided always, that all the religious instruction given in the Orphanage shall be confined to the Holy Scriptures in the authorised English version, and to the truths therein contained, and that no catechisms, formularies, or articles of faith, whether of the United Church of England and Ireland, as by law established, or of any other body of professing Christians, shall be taught to the children.

"The Trustees shall make such provision as they shall, from time to time, think fit for the assembling of the children for divine worship in the institution, having regard, as far as practicable, to the earnest desire of the founder, that the children may be trained up as simple and sincere followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, without reference to sectarian distinctions and prejudices, and it is hereby declared that the trustees shall, out of the income of the Orphanage, expend such sum as shall from time to time be, in their judgment, necessary to provide for each orphan, on leaving the asylum, a sufficient outfit in clothes, at the discretion of the said trustees, together with a Bible, and the said trustees may also pay such sum as an apprentice fee as they may, at their discretion, think fit."

The surplus income in future accruing from the property is directed by the founder to be spent in increasing the accommodation for orphans in the ratio of one boy to two girls.

A very graphic description of the Orphanage appeared in our contemporary the *Birmingham Daily Post*, on Monday, Aug. 2, from which we quote the following particulars:—

At present there are 150 orphans in the asylum, of whom 40 are boys. Their ages range from two years and a half upwards. The establishment consists of a matron, Miss Stockwin, a sub-matron (her sister, Miss Ann Stockwin), a schoolmaster and drill-master, the elder girls acting as monitresses, a sewing mistress, and an out-door mistress. Great stress is laid upon the physical training of the children, and upon the industrial training of the girls, who do all the housework. The school teaching is explained in the extract already given from the trust deed; and we may add that Mr. Mason most earnestly desires to put this part of the school under Government inspection—though he does not desire Government grants—but he is hindered by an absurd rule of "the Department" which excludes boarding and feeding schools from the benefit of Government inspection. The health of the children is placed under the care of two homœopathic practitioners —Mr. Mason has for many years been a disciple of Hahnemann—namely, Dr. Gibbs Blake and Mr. Wynn Thomas, both of Birmingham. The religious services in the chapel are conducted at present by the Wesleyan Methodists, and provision is made for any residents in the neighbourhood who desire to attend, a special gallery, holding two hundred persons, being allowed to them. The friends of the children are allowed to visit them twice a year, when Mr. Mason tells us the place is "like a fair" with the gifts of toys and the number of visitors. Friends are also permitted to visit at other times, on obtaining a written order.

The Orphanage stands fronting to Bell Lane, a little way behind the Birmingham and Lichfield turnpike road, at Erdington. It occupies, with playgrounds, plantations, garden ground, and fields, about thirteen acres of land, lying high on a gravelly soil, well open on all sides, and commanding fine views of the surrounding country, from which its great central tower, 200 feet high, may be seen for many miles. The character of the building is Lombardic, varied so as to suit modern requirements. The plan is that of an irregular oblong, presenting a length of 207 feet at the north-west or entrance front in Bell Lane; 190 feet to the north-east or playground front; 300 feet to the east or garden side; and 270 to the west side, where the out-offices are placed. The gabled ends of the building project slightly, and in these the windows (crowned with sunk arches, pierced with enriched rose windows) are somewhat more boldly treated than the rest, and with excellent effect. Each gable is finished with a colossal figure of an angel standing with folded wings, as if watching over the happiness of the children below. The long lines of roof are picturesquely broken by dormer windows, gabled, and of large size, to give light to the sleeping rooms; and over the roofs three boldly designed towers rise to irregular heights. The principal tower, near the centre of the building, is 200 feet high. The enclosed centre of this structure is used as a shaft to carry off the heated air from the building, but, by a series of staircases, provision is made for ascending to the gallery at the top. Over the entrance in Bell Lane is another tower, about 120 feet high, covered in with a high-pitched roof; and a third tower, 110 feet high, serves as a chimney shaft, into which all the smoke flues of the building are made to discharge their contents, there being, otherwise, neither fire-place nor chimney throughout the edifice, all the heating being done by pipes containing hot water, and the cooking, washing, and drying by steam. Two features of the elevation require to be noticed. One is an exquisite little porch, leading to the arcade, through which access is obtained to the main entrance corridor. The other is a massive rusticated arcade supporting the playground front, and itself forming a covered playground 174 feet long by 25 feet wide. The materials of the building are bricks (of which about three millions were used, all of them made upon the Orphanage land), with massive dressings and enrichments of Tower Hill stone for the basement, and Derbyshire and Shrewsbury stone for the mouldings, string courses, buttresses, and windows. The elevation and main plans were designed by Mr. J. R. Botham, architect, of Birmingham, to whom they do very great credit; but owing to circumstances of a private nature, Mr. Botham retired at an early period from the superintendance of the work, and the building was then conducted, and the whole of the interior arrangements were designed and carried out by Mr. Mason himself, the results of his ingenuity and skill being apparent in every part, even to the minutest detail. The cost of the building, as we have already mentioned, was about £60,000, as nearly as can be ascertained, for Mr. Mason confesses that when the clerk of the works reported an expenditure of £50,000, he grew somewhat careless about keeping accounts, although a good deal of the interior work, all the furnishing, and the laying out of the grounds, still remained to be done.

The plan of the interior arrangements is very simple. Access is gained from Bell Lane by the porch already noted, which leads to a lofty corridor, 155 feet by 9. At the end of this is a second corridor, 121 feet by 6, giving access to offices and staircases, and to various rooms in the south-east front. On the left-hand side of the main corridor is a chapel, plainly fitted up with open benches. Beyond is a range of windows, looking into an enclosed courtyard. On the right hand side of the corridor are a room, 37 by 30, for visitors, a board room for the trustees, and other apartments, including the private room of the matron. At the end of the corridor are a sewing room, 20 by 30, and a music and drill room, 30 by 37. Turning along the smaller corridor, we come to a dining room for the matron and teachers, a servants' hall, an infants' dining room (for there are a good many very little ones in the Orphanage), and then the main dining hall, 70 feet by 23 feet, fitted with massive tables, and with a separate seat for each child. Near this apartment are the girls' cloak room, pantries, store rooms, and other offices, all of ample size and most conveniently arranged. Opposite the door of the dining hall is the kitchen, a superb room, 62 feet by 30 feet, well-lighted and lofty in proportion. All the cooking, it should be noted, is done by steam, on a most ingenious plan devised by Mr. Mason himself. Underneath, in the basement, is the oven for baking bread, of which, we need scarcely say, a large supply is wanted. This oven is also of Mr. Mason's invention, and is so constructed as with one firing to retain its heat for several days together, to the great economy of fuel. Opposite the kitchen, but divided from it by an open passage, is the laundry, 38 by 30, fitted with all kinds of labour-saving contrivances; and having a series of very skilfully constructed steam drying closets. The whole of the steam required for these purposes, and the hot water for warming the entire building, through about 5,000 feet of 4-inch piping, is supplied by one small boiler, with which is connected an engine for pumping water, hot and cold, to each floor of the building. Underneath the basement is a rain water cistern, 6 feet deep, and measuring 62 feet by 13 feet.

Ascending by a handsome staircase to the first floor, we find the general arrangement of plan similar to that on the ground floor—the corridors corresponding and the rooms leading out of them to the several parts of the building. Amongst the principal are play rooms for boys and girls—the former 94 feet by 16, and the latter 37 feet by 30; a school room 70 feet by 23; three class rooms, each 23 feet by 18; and thirteen small rooms allotted to various purposes. In addition to these are separate lavatories for boys and girls, each 63 feet by 15, and so arranged that each child has its own washing place, towel and other appliances. Adjoining these is the wardrobe, fitted with separate hooks and places for the clothes of each child; and the bath room, a lofty apartment, 38 feet by 30, supplied with an ample number of baths, and with hot water, contained in three iron cisterns, cylinder-shaped, and measuring 10 feet high, by 2 feet 6 inches diameter. Cold water is obtained from a tank 63 feet long by 4 feet wide and 2 deep. An important feature of the arrangements on this floor is the infirmary, which occupies a space in the entrance front, 47 feet by 30 feet, is capable of being shut off from the rest of the building, and has special means of heating and ventilation. Close to the infirmary is a convalescent room, 66 feet by 20, and having a very pleasant look-out, enough in itself to bring the sick children round to renewed health. The dormitories are situated upon the second floor, the whole of which is occupied by them. There are three for boys, the largest measuring 72 feet by 30, and the smaller ones each 23 by 18. For girls there are six dormitories, measuring 94 feet by 34—the largest—down to 20 feet by 15, the smallest. All these rooms are very lofty and well ventilated. The two divisions are so arranged as to be capable of complete separation from each other; and in each division there are sleeping rooms for teachers or attendants, who have charge of the children during the night. Each child has a separate bed, and all the apartments are kept beautifully clean.

Before closing this notice, we must say that there is one point—and this a most important one—which the fullest description would fail to bring out. It is the tender thoughtfulness and the loving care manifested in all respects for the comfort and happiness of the children. If Mr. Mason had been contriving a house for children of his own, he could not have studied the wants and habits of little ones more closely, or thought out each detail with greater pains than he has done for these poor orphans. Abundant evidences of this appeal to the visitor, however careless he may be. Not only may the provision of separate beds and washing appliances be cited in proof of our remark, but there are also the arrangements of the bath room, in which the physical comfort of the very little ones is especially studied, and the covered play-ground, with its triple columns, erected not for the requirements of strength, but with a particular eye to the pastime of hide-and-seek. The same thoughtfulness is apparent in the flowers ranged along the main corridor, in the separate seats in the dining hall, in the carefully sloped backs of the chapel benches, in the provision of musical instruments, and in many other ways readily to be noted by those who love children and know their ways. Then, again, the little ones have their infantine toys, the bigger ones amusements suited to maturer age, and for sturdy lads and lasses there are swings and gymnastic apparatus in the ample, open play-ground, looking out freshly into the fields. One thing more is too pleasant to be omitted—namely, that the Founder knows all the children in the noble home he has provided, that he is known and loved by them, that the infants trot up to him and put their tiny hands in his, that the elder ones brighten at his approach, that he has a kindly word and fatherly look for one and all, and last, but not least, that his own benevolent spirit seems to have passed into the minds of the attendants from highest to lowest, making the whole place what the Founder desires it to be, a Home for those who are homeless, a Family circle for those who have lost their natural protectors. May God bless such a work as this, and bless, too, the man who has done it!

The Tragedy of Quotations.—"Macbeth" abounds with stock quotations to a greater degree than even "Hamlet." Here are a few:—

> "When shall we three meet again?"
>
> "I dare do all that may become a man,
> Who dares do more is none."
>
> "Throw physic to the dogs."
>
> "The time has been that when the brains were out
> The man would die."
>
> "There is no art
> To find the mind's construction in the face."
>
> "That keep the word of promise to our ear,
> And break it to our hope."

FOUND OUT.

Maggie! where can you be hiding?
Through the field and through the lane,
Everywhere we've tried to find you—
Come, or Nell will cry again.
Mother's walking on the common,
Father's talking to the Squire,
Mr. Breve, the music-master,
Wants you up among the choir;—

Says he can't begin to practice
Till his leading singer's there:
Hymn and chaunt and grand Te Deum
He is waiting to prepare.
And the Vicar, who, just now, dear,
Stay'd to chat a little while,
Ask'd for Maggie with the ringlets,
Maggie with the sunny smile.

Tell us where you're hiding, dearest;
Only let us hear you speak—
"Hush!" says Betty, "don't you see her?
This is but a lovers' freak.
Just peep round the oak-tree, Bella,
There our Maggie you will see,
Willy Martyn close beside her—
We have found her out, we three!"

* * * * * *

When the glow-worm shone that ev'ning,
And the deer had gone to rest,
Will and Maggie homeward strolling,
Full of sweetheart's mirth and jest,
Heard the children's merry laughter,
Heard their last long cheery shout,
Never dreaming in their blindness
That their secret was found out!

Edward Legge.

ON PENS.

They must have been invented when the world began. Is it possible to imagine man at any time destitute of writing materials—unless, indeed, in a state of cannibalism, when he cuts up his friend by other means?

In every form—as stylus, tube, and quill—the pen has been more powerful than the sword. Although less suddenly fatal in effect, it has dealt more formidable blows—blows that have descended from generation to generation, and which will be felt for ever by mankind. What an army is now on active service, fighting the famous battle of life, silently but desperately, armed with the mighty little weapon! Heroes engaged in the mortal strife, encounter fatigue and danger with dogged obstinacy; unscared by the carnage that surrounds them, they face the enemy boldly, until unable from sheer exhaustion to stand up against him.

In the ranks, the fight goes on blindly and mechanically.

> "Few think of the thinking few,
> Many never think who think they do;"

they follow the thoughts of those who reflect for them, the generals and superior officers, who direct the mental manœuvres of the vast host, merely by using the weapon common to all, with knowledge and sagacity. Some of these leaders are impetuous, and at times imprudent in their command; but, by a merciful provision of Providence, the wisdom of the majority prevails, and their edicts tend to enhance the happiness of those under their intellectual sway.

If not mightier than the sword, is not the pen the great humanizer of the world? Is it not typical of the embodiment of thought? I love to contemplate the tiny implement, and reflect upon the wondrous miracles it has achieved.

With the advance of civilisation it has become sharper and more incisive in make and shape, until it now looks like an instrument of torture, as it in reality proves to be when wielded by some hands. No thumbscrew, rack, or guillotine ever caused such agony as it can inflict. The schoolboy feels its sting, the old man knows its prodigious power when guided by his palsied fingers. It matters little of what material it is formed, although it is a pleasant conceit to assume an affinity between the pen and the purpose it is made to serve. Death warrants and trenchant satires are consistently supposed to be written with the sharpest steel; love letters and bankers' cheques with the softest quills.

Cannot you see the pettifogging lawyer in his musty den mending a bunch of dirty pens wherewith to do his dirty work? Be sure he puts a strong point to all of them, to make his harsh words harsher to the eye and feelings of those for whom they are intended.

Would not the ruby and diamond nibs of old, and the softly-padded ink bottles made to receive them, be more appropriate for my lady the countess to use in her boudoir than any metallic materials of the present day?

Those learned professors of the mystic art who tell your temper, mental health, and other occult characteristics by your hand-writing, would assuredly be greatly aided in their useless investigations if previously informed what pen was used when giving them your problem to solve.

A bad pen can ruffle the calmest mind, and, according to an Irish authority, make any writer forget his spelling.

"Faith, it's written with a *pin*," is held to be a valid excuse for any Hibernian being unable to read, and wishing to conceal his ignorance—the peculiar pronunciation being taken as correct, the most astute might be pardoned for not deciphering a scratch.

The readiest writer may be sacrificed by his writing materials. With greasy paper, thick ink, and a worn-out pen, the most brilliant thoughts get confused; the finest sentences become obscure; and, finally, "the vein" is lost in anger and despair.

> "But give him good paper, and mend him a pen,
> And see if he cannot write poetry then,"

as one of the rhyming humourists sings of himself; and if he cannot, it is Nature's fault and none other.

Strange to say caligraphy has but little changed as improvements have been made in writing implements. The spider-like style of penmanship of the Elizabethan age has even become less general since the introduction of steel pens.

Nevertheless, writing is now more cultivated, although but little pains are taken to acquire what is called a good hand.

The Italians, French, and Germans, all write better than we do; and the Americans are, as a nation, the best penmen in the world.

This inferiority on our part is remarkable, and all the more so when our reputation as men of business is taken into consideration.

It is not, however, among the rank and file of society that the inferiority exists to such an extent as in the upper classes. In our grammar schools and other institutions, from which our clerks and book-keepers emanate, writing is usually carefully taught, but elsewhere it is strangely neglected by teachers, and despised by learners. Indeed, even they who are employed in our trade and commerce are not always accomplished in this the most mechanical, and therefore the easiest branch of education. In many of our eminent banks the clerks write illegibly, a bankers' book being frequently the hardest reading extant. Considering the simplicity of the rules of penmanship, and how easily they are applied, it is marvellous how commonly they are set at defiance, and the different styles of hand-writing that are formed in tracing modern hieroglyphics. If character can be detected and defined by any such means, it is surely to be regretted that some writers do not take the trouble to disguise their hands, and so conceal their wicked tendencies. It may be attributed to John Bull's frank nature that he is so careless how he writes; he would, however, lose nothing by learning to use his pen with greater dexterity than he does at present. Some optimists contend that as long as what is written be good, it matters not how it is indited, an opinion based—although the speaker may not be aware of it—upon the facilities afforded by the press. I wonder whether the compositor has the same good opinion (if he has any at all) of the wisest words he ever set up, as the reader who peruses them in all the distinctness of type! The most expert printer has his patience tried by the waste of time which deciphering and correcting illegible "copy" must necessarily involve. First impressions are important, and none more so than the first impressions of good writing. We may affect to sneer at it, but it nevertheless affords a certain pleasure, while bad penmanship conveys insensibly, perhaps, but undeniably, an indication of ignorance on the part of the writer. Holding such opinions, I should be an accomplished and graceful quill driver; but, alas! my "copy" is no better than that of many other contributors to this Journal—perhaps not so good. I am a warning to those who do as I do, and who desire to do better—as I most sincerely advise them to try.

W. M.

THE BŒUFS GRAS IN PARIS.

Who would not be a Prize Ox? The question has been asked before and will be repeated by all mortals who envy the good luck of the unwieldly quadruped. A Prize Ox! The word ox is, if anything, open to objection by reason of its sharpness. It has a decided affinity to knocks; sounds somewhat like axe, which is suggestive of cracks on the skull. But what dreams of luxury and luscious eating (before and after) does not the word invoke! Consider the career of such a child of fortune. Studied anxiously; provided even with appropriate parents; born in the greenest fields, if not in the cosiest cowshed; nursed tenderly by hand and nature—each striving to outvie the other in assiduous attention to the little stranger. Unrestricted liberty allowed, consistent with powers of endurance, which dare not be exceeded; frolics encouraged, as the gay young calf merges into bullhood; every opportunity to satisfy an increasing appetite afforded—mashes, mangolds, scientific condiments provided at the shortest notice and slightest hint of a desire for more.

Is it not a pleasant career so far?

Then the show! the competition! the victory! the honours of the blue riband!—not to mention the polite attentions received in the show-yard by night and day—the delicate caresses, punches in the back, and loudly expressed admiration of thousands—"Eh, mon, he be a foine beeast," (language which all oxen understand) heard every minute.

On leaving the show-yard, a *mauvais quart d'heure* has to be encountered, certainly; but that is managed so well—all things are made so comfortable—that even *in extremis* a Prize Ox is to envied.

These reflections were forced upon us by the engraving. It represents a more exalted sphere of prize cattle life than we have yet alluded to. Here the most celebrated *Bos* in the whole civilized world is somewhere to be seen—the practised eye will easily recognise him—the *Bœufs gras* that is to be led in triumph round the streets of Paris—colours flying, bands playing, fireworks exploding, to do him honour. The *Marché de la Villette* is shown, stormed, as it is annually when the occasion comes round, by an excited crowd—defying two policemen who look alarmed—rushing to behold the king of eatable animals whose Royal progress makes a greater sensation than the appearance of the Emperor or any of his satellites.

The *Bœufs gras* is cheered to the very door of the shambles. His remains, covered with fancy-coloured trophies and exposed outside the shop of the fortunate butcher who purchased him, are bought up and eagerly devoured by an appreciative multitude.

Can ambition attain a greater height?

An illiterate, but clever Methodist preacher, who was a collier in Somerset, gave out for a text:

"I can do all things."

He then paused, and looking at the Bible keenly, said in his own native Somersetshire dialect:

"What's that thee says, Paul—'I can do aal things?' I'll bet thee half-a-crown o that."

So he took half-a-crown out of his pocket and put it on the book.

"However," he added, "let's see what the Apostle has to say for himself." So he read on the next words, "through Christ that strengtheneth me."

"Oh!" says he, "if that's the terms of the bet, I'm off," and he put the half-crown into his pocket again, and preached his sermon on the power of Christian grace.

THE MERMAID.

The poetical idea of the mermaid lives in the legends and traditions of all nations. The ballad and fairy lore of all ages is full of this beautiful creation.

Our forefathers believed in the mermaid. The British chronologist records that one was actually taken off the Sussex coast in 1208. Mr. Barnum made a small fortune out of his sham woman-fish in New York. Many years ago the Lords of the Admiralty had a serious proposition laid before them developing a scheme for entrapping mermaids and mer-men.

Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale of the mermaid is perhaps one of the most pathetic legends of modern days; but an old Galloway ballad, which has been re-written by Walter Thornbury and published by that gentleman, is more in the spirit of the ancient poetic fiction. A young knight of Galloway hears the voice of the Siren.

" I've dwelt on the Nith," a young knight said,
" These twenty years and three,
But the sweetest song that e'er broke from lip
Comes through the wood to me.

" Is it a voice from earth or air
That makes such melody ?
It would lure the lark from the morning cloud,
And it may well lure me."

" Master, I dream'd a dreary dream,
And it happen'd in this wood;
I dream'd that you kiss'd a maiden's lips
That dripp'd with crimson blood.

" Kiss not the singer's lips, Sir Knight,
Kiss not the singer's chin,
Touch not her hand," said the frighten'd boy,
" She is born of Death and Sin.

" She comes from out the hollow wave,
So ghastly and so fair;
She is seen each first night of the moon
Combing her yellow hair.

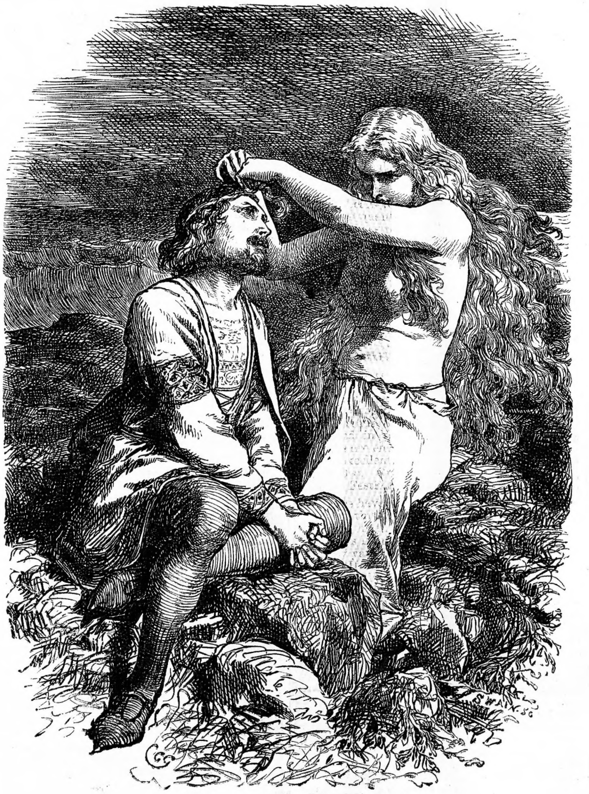
" And those who listen to her voice,
If they're of mortal birth,
Ne'er hear the song of the lark again,
Or wake again on earth."

The music was as irresistible as mermaiden's songs are said to have been in all ages. The young knight was soon by the singer's side.

He kiss'd her blue eyes twenty times,
And then her honey lip,
And spread her hanks of watery hair
In the moonbeams to drip.

" But what'll she say, your bonny bride,
With gold and jewels bright,
When the kisses you kept for her sweet lips
You squander on mine to-night ? "

He took his lips from her red rose mouth,
His arms from her waist so small.
" Sweet maiden, I sin to linger here,
Yon shines my bridal hall.



THE MERMAID.—*BY C. GREEN.*

" But first a token of love, sweet May,
A token give me now."
She pluck'd a lock of her golden hair,
And bound it round his brow.

" Oh, softer, softer, loop and bind
That love-knot, my sweet May;
My head is rent with a burning pain,
Loosen it quick, I pray."

She weaved o'er his brow the lily flower,
With witch-knots, nine and nine:
" If ye were bridegroom of a queen,
This night ye shall be mine."

And twice he faintly turn'd his head
And twice rose from the ground,
And twice he feebly sought to lift
That garland, loop'd and bound.

But the spirit's spell would not yield to the mortal's efforts. The siren claimed the knight's undivided homage. She took the bride-ring from his hand and tossed it in the sea.

Then she cast into the sea his robe,
With gold on every hem,
And she cast away his cloak and plume,
The jewels binding them.

She folded him in her lily arms,
To bear him to her home,
Her fleece of hair trail'd o'er the sand,
As she pass'd into the foam.

From the disappearance of the knight-lover, the poet turns to the waiting bride, the fairest maid in Galloway.

Each breath of wind among the leaves
Seem'd like her bridegroom's song,
She heard his voice in every sound
That came the whole day long.

Then sang to her a blythe wee bird,
From off the hawthorn green,—
" Loose out the love-curls from your hair
Ye plaited yestere'en."

The speckled wood-lark from the clouds
Of heaven came singing down,—
" Take out the bride-knots from your hair,
Take off your bridal crown."

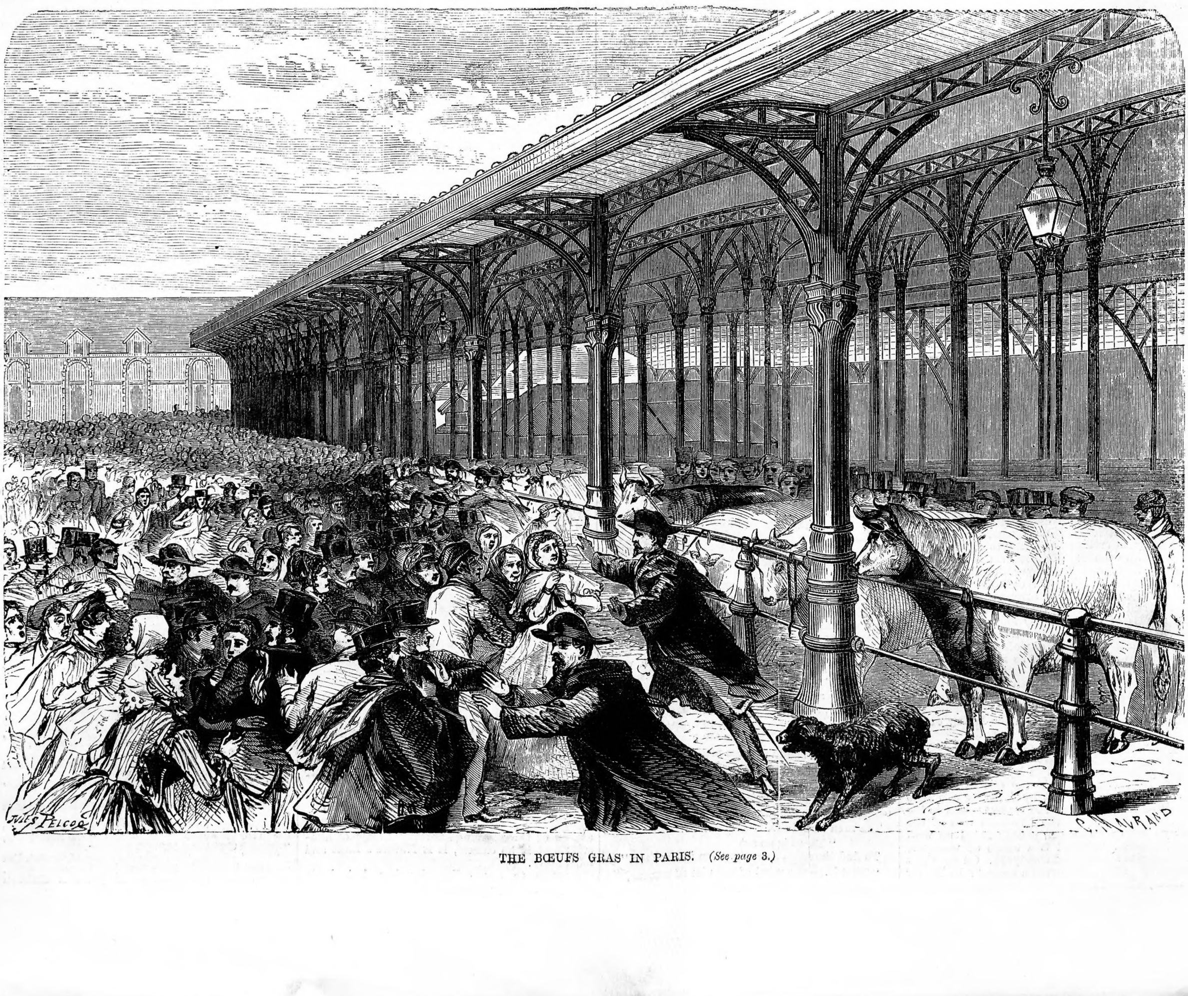
It was the mid-hour of the night,
Her silver bell did ring,
Sounding as if no earthly hand
Had touched the silken string.

There was a cheek that lady's press'd,
White as the marble-stone,
And a hand as cold as the drifting snow
Was laid on her breast-bone.

" Oh, cold is thy hand, my Willie dear,
Cold, cold thy frozen lip;
Oh, wring those locks of yellow hair,
From which the cold drops drip."

" Go seek another bridegroom, love,
To kiss thy bosom sweet;
My bride is the yellow water-lily,
Its leaves my bridal sheet ! "

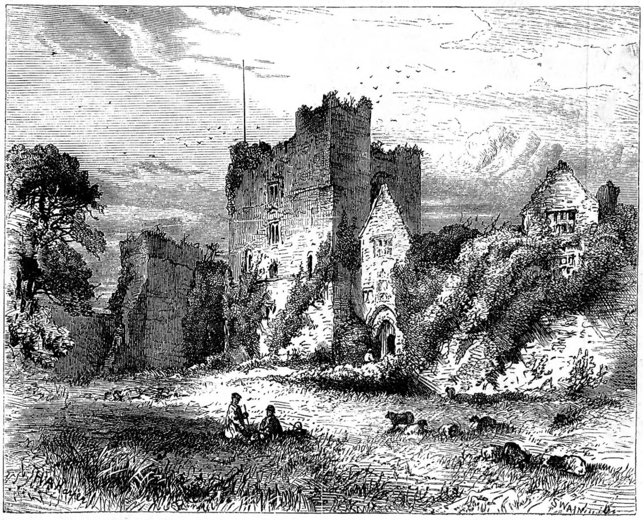
Mr. C. Green, who illustrates the poem, has treated the subject with a thorough feeling for its poetry. His mermaid is a higher flight of creative fancy than comes within the general treatment of this class of subject.



THE BŒUFS GRAS IN PARIS. *(See page 3.)*

LUDLOW CASTLE.

Shropshire is not more famous for its magnificent scenery than for the mediœval relic which our artist has here depicted. The old town of Ludlow—in itself an object of considerable interest—stands upon a knoll, and to the westward, on the heights of a steep line of rocks, rise the grey towers of Ludlow Castle, which at one time must have been impregnable. From this point the view is perhaps unsurpassed in all England. Eastward is Titterstone Clee Hill; on the north is Corve Dale, and a series of hills which stretch as far as the eyes can see, the beautiful valley of the Teme laying immediately before you, with the Stretton Hills as a background; to the west is a line of hill and forest; while, looking back, the Teme, prettiest and tiniest (in some parts) of rivers, disappears in a narrow ravine, "formed" (says a contemporary writer) "by some convulsion of the ancient world, which cut off the knoll on which now stand the castle and town, and gave it its picturesque character." So beautiful, indeed, is the surrounding country, that Ludlow has been called by an enthusiastic admirer—probably a Salopian—the queen of our inland watering places.



LUDLOW CASTLE.

Of the Castle the most conspicuous part is the Norman keep. The entrance gate is of later construction than the keep. Here Sir Henry Sydney, of Penshurst, when Lord President of Wales and the Marches, kept a court only second to royalty. Sir Henry was the father of Sir Philip Sydney, the poet and man of letters, and had for his secretary no less a personage than Samuel Butler, the author of "Hudibras," part of which epic is traditionally said to have been written at the castle.

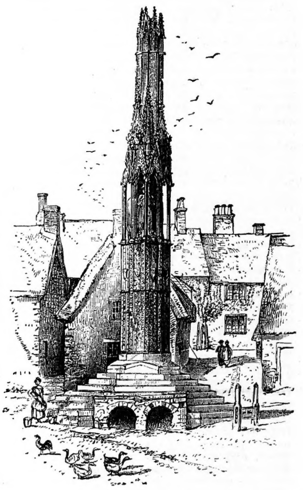
There is diversity of opinion as to the room occupied by the Worcestershire poet. Mr. Thomas Wright, F.S.A., who has written an excellent "History of Ludlow," believes it to have been "the room over the gateway into the inner court in the buildings for which the castle was indebted to Sir Henry Sydney," and which our picture represents.

Not far from the castle, near the Vinnall Hill, is a little trout stream called Sunny Gutter, and the valley here is the scene of one of Milton's finest poems, "Comus," produced in 1634, when the "sweet singer" was in his twenty-sixth year. The *raison d'être* of "Comus" is thus related. At the above period the Earl of Bridgwater was President of Wales, and in honour of his vice-royalty dispensed splendid hospitalities. A celebrated musician named Lawes was asked to arrange a musical entertainment, and, as Milton was his friend, if not his pupil, it is conjectured that the latter furnished the words of the masque which were set to music by Lawes. Maryknoll valley abounds with wild flowers, and, with its surroundings, is the very place to take a poet's imagination captive.

GEDDINGTON CROSS.

Amongst the few memorial crosses which yet remain to remind the passer-by of the romantic history of Queen Eleanor is the structure at Geddington, Northamptonshire.

Readers who have not forgotten the English history which they learnt at school will remember that, afterthe sad death of Eleanor, her Majesty's body was taken from Lincoln to London by easy stages. A crosswas erected at every place where the royal bier rested for the night, the site being marked by the King's Chancellor and other officials. The number of these structures is variously estimated; but we know that crosses were put up at Lincoln, Northampton, Stoney Stratford, Woburn, Dunstable, St. Alban's, Waltham, Cheap, Westminster, and Geddington, the latter of which is the subject of our illustration. The top of the Geddington structure was probably surmounted by a cross, or by a statue of the Virgin and the infant Saviour. Nothing remains of those figures now, but with this exception everything else is in a good state of preservation. Triangular in shape, this structure has figures at the angles, the features of which are very similar to those of the effigy of Queen Eleanor in Westminster Abbey. There are good reasons for supposing that these memorial crosses at Geddington and Northampton are the work of some of the numerous scholars of Pisano. Formerly there was a royal palace at Geddington, which was often visited by those of our Sovereigns who loved the chase.



GEDDINGTON CROSS.

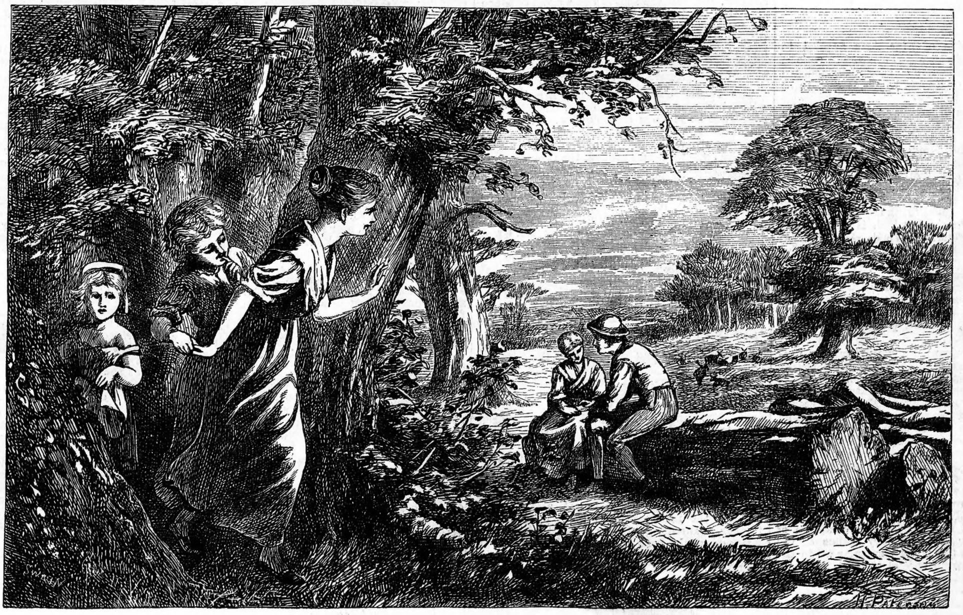
THEATRICALS UNDER CANVAS.

With the gentle reader's permission, we are bound for the play. You need not trouble about attiring yourself in evening dress—tail-coat and white tie would not ensure you the least respect at the Royal Alhambra Theatre, duly licensed for the performance of stage plays, and capable of seating seven hundred persons, or thereabouts. Neither will your opera glass be of any service: binoculars are not required at the R. A. T., the *habitués* of which Temple of the Drama, indeed, are remarkably quick sighted, and, when they have paid their money, insist upon having a seat where they can see. They only pay threepence for the most part, but they are as exacting as any patron of Her Majesty's Theatre, or that at Covent Garden. They bring their own refreshments, and smoking is permitted in the pit. Now, at your Adelphis and Haymarkets, and Strands and Gaieties, under the most liberal management, you only see the performance conducted inside the house; the proprietor of the Royal Alhambra Theatre is more generous. He gives you an outside entertainment, professionally known as "the promenade." This is generally appreciated, more especially by lovers of the drama whose impecuniosity will not allow of the expenditure of the necessary threepence for admission. On the outside of the theatre the whole of the company assemble, and the large platform is peopled with Clowns, and Harlequins, and Columbines, and wicked Baronets, and virtuous Maidens, and cruel Sailors, and Highwaymen, and Serving-Men, and Serving-Women, and Comic Singers, and Comic Dancers, some in most resplendent array—covered with lace, and gold, and spangles, and with fine feathers in their slouching hats, and boots of the cavalier pattern. After they have promenaded the platform a few times, the band plays a country dance, then a waltz, a polka, a quadrille, in which the whole company join—the wicked Baronet and the virtuous Maiden and the rest laying aside their dignity, and taking part in the festive dance in a manner magnificent to behold. This performance continues until the booth is full; indeed, it is chiefly with the object of attracting those who like plenty for their money that this display is made. An approved juvenile device is to pay your threepence immediately the doors are opened, take up your position *pro tempore* on the stage outside, and remain there until "all in to begin" is proclaimed; by which means you appear to see two distinct entertainments for the price of one (a truly Machiavellian dodge), and, what is equally gratifying, are allowed the inestimable privilege of standing close to the performers, and even hearing them talk to one another. I remember shaking hands with a clown once, at a similar theatre; and once, too, when I was a very small boy, but an insatiable lover of the play, a Columbine kissed your humble servant! I was the observed of all observers; and ever since I have been regarded as connected with the stage, and in a fair way to ruin and the gallows.

They only charge you a shilling for a seat in the boxes at the R. A. T., and we have hardly taken our places and wondered at the large audience ere the curtain rises, and there is a loud demand for silence. The play is "*Deathwing; or, The Skeleton Crew.*" Of the author no mention is made, and as that gentleman plays a very subordinate part in the piece, there is the less necessity for saying anything about him. The piece is probably intended to enforce the moral that for a criminal there is no escape, even when he has murdered his victim, and years have elapsed without detection and punishment. In the first scene we have a young man (represented by a female member of the company) lamenting his hard fate at being turned out of doors by his father, Farmer Bertram. Master Bertram appears to unite the practice of agriculture and rurale conomy with the profession of thesea; for his costume is half farm labourer, half sailor. He is accosted by a stranger, Philip Redhill, the nephew—as he afterwards informs us—of Sir Edward Somebody. Redhill, soft-hearted as a woman, is deeply moved by young Bertram's situation, and shows particular concern for his *protegé* when he learns that Farmer Bertram's rent, amounting to £100, is due. He promises to intercede for Bertram junior, and appoints a meeting for that night. Redhill is so well dressed, has such glossy black ringlets, speaks with such *empressement*, and looks generally so amiable and exemplary a character that his subsequent conduct shocks everybody. He visits the house of Farmer Bertram, and finds that worthy apparently in the last stage of *cholera morbus;* for he is ghastly pale, and continually lays his hand upon his stomach. Sir Reginald is Bertram's landlord, and Redhill benevolently offers to take the latter's rent to his relative. But Bertram senior doesn't see this, and is not such a fool as he looks. Very nearly though, for in a moment of forgetfulness, which he afterwards deeply regrets, he tells Redhill where he keeps his money—in a box under the bedroom window—and Redhill, after defaming the character of young Bertram, knocks the farmer down with a stick, and looks for the gold. Having found this, he returns to the lower apartment, and is attacked by Bertram *pére*, who has resolved, though he is still apparently suffering from cholera, to save his hard-earned money or perish in the attempt. Owing to Redhill's superior strength, he does the latter, and expires in his own gore. Before finally dying, however, he turns his white face to his murderer, and ejaculates a reminder in rhyme that he will never cease from troubling him:

> "On sea or land,
> By day or night,
> My spirit shall never
> Quit thy sight."

This anathema is too much even for the reckless Redhill, who flies, overcome with emotion. Redhill's character now comes out in its blackest hues. He meets young Bertram, and exchanges clothes with him. In a generous outburst of sentiment, he also returns him the stick with which he murdered the young man's father, and which Master Bertram had previously sold him for a large sum of money, which his British pluck would only allow him to accept when proffered as a loan. Bertram junior is exultant at being so well fitted out, and overjoyed at the prospect of a speedy reconciliation with his father, when a woman rushes in who has known Bertram since his cheildhood, and, with the singularly brief, ungrammatical, and indefinite exclamation—"that's him!" orders him into custody as though she were a Justice of the Peace! The miserable Bertram vainly asserts his innocence; but two most evil-looking officers of justice appearing at that moment, the young farmer is carried off to gaol. In the next act we are introduced to Sir Reginald and his adopted son, Wildfire Ned, who dressed in an appropriate velvet suit, does nothing but cross the stage and rave for an opportunity of displaying his courage. Bertram's sweetheart sues for mercy to Sir Reginald, whom she evidently believes to be a sort of Lord Chancellor and public executioner rolled into one; but he is inflexible, though without the slightest



FOUND OUT.—*By H. PATTERSON.* (*See page 3.*)

cause, unless he is incensed at the murderer of Farmer Bertram having carried off the £100 which would have gone into his coffers as rent. The third act discovers young Bertram in prison; there are no locks, bolts, or bars to fly asunder at the approach of the jailers, who scorn such appliances, and keep watch and ward over the prisoner as though their business were rather a joke than otherwise. By representing himself as the son of the new governor appointed on that day only, Wildfire Ned procures an interview with the prisoner, who has already had the melancholy satisfaction of seeing his beloved Ellen for a few minutes, the janitors not being proof against the offer of lucre made to them by the young woman. Wildfire Ned and an assistant dose the jailers with some drug, of the nature of which we are not informed, and should be in great doubt were it not that somebody ventures upon the assertion that it is "Proosic acid." Whatsoever the drug may be it is effective; and under its influence both jailers are bound to their chairs, which gives them an opportunity of introducing a little "business" of a comic order—such as shamming sleep, rolling on the floor with their chairs on their backs, pretending to suffer the most excruciating torments from the "proosic acid," and the like; at all of which the audience roar tremendously, and would fain have the performance over again. With the assistance of the intrepid Wildfire Ned, Bertram the younger escapes from prison, but is almost immediately set upon and captured by Deathwing and his Skeleton Crew. This personage and his satellites are very incarnations of fiendishness, and strike awe into every one but Wildfire Ned, who would rather like a brush with Old Nick himself than not be engaged in some perilous enterprise. Deathwing, the captain of a smuggling vessel, and his crew of quasi skeletons are a fearful spectacle. Their faces are chalked in lines, and an attempt is made to represent their skeleton ribs in the same way. A more simple, effective, and, I am bound to say, hideous result was probably never attained on any stage. The only effect it has upon Wildfire Ned, whose appearance is the invariable signal for a commencement of hostilities with somebody or other, is to urge him on to deadly combat, despite the warning and lugubrious accents of Deathwing, who entreats him not to throw himself into Death's way at his age. Deriding this advice, Wildfire Ned calls upon the pirate captain to defend himself, which that worthy does most effectually by summoning to his assistance some score or more of his skeleton band. Deathwing, being of an amatory disposition, has captured Ellen, young Bertram's sweetheart, and announces to the terrified but virtuous girl that he has sworn from his earliest years to make her his wife or mistress, terms which with the potent pirate are synonymous. Deathwing, who, by the way, adds the profession of private detective to his more irregular employment, is rapidly overcoming his assailants, including the valiant Wildfire Ned. when, and rather unfairly, the Spirit of old Farmer Bertram appears to the astonished mariners, and mutters his abracadabra with such good effect as to secure a victory for the landsmen. With the aid of red fire an effective *tableau* is thus obtained, and the curtain goes down amidst immense applause.

The audience followed the fortunes of young Bertram with unvarying interest, as they would have done had the play lasted double the time it occupied in representation. Nothing was too improbable for them. It was only when the dialogue descended to common-place, everyday language that dissatisfaction was plainly expressed in their faces. They had not paid for that sort of thing; what they wanted was strong, vituperative diction, with an abundance of "die, bloodthirsty villain!" "perish, viper!" and "cruel, cruel foe!" in it, plenty of fighting, the frequent appearance of some supernatural being, and red fire at the termination of every act. This they had, and were satisfied. It put them in good humour with themselves, and with everybody, and they sat out with exceeding comfort the whole of the performance, which included several comic songs, and another drama in three acts, that, under its title, "The Dumb Man of Manchester," is doubtless too well known to some readers of this journal to require any description. As far as the present writer is concerned, he supped sufficiently full of horrors upon "Deathwing and his Skeleton Crew."

E. L.

In the Exhibition of Fine Arts applied to Industry, (an article on which appears in page 2) is the celebrated collection of engravings belonging to M. Dutuit, of Rouen, which is said to be worth upwards of £30,000.

"W. H." writes as follows to the *Athenæum*: "I purchased some time since, with other engravings, one 18 by 12, signed 'Mich. Angeli Bonaroti, Florentini, Manu Sculpta. Romæ. Cum privilegio D. Greg. XIII.' The subject is the Entombment of Christ, treated entirely differently from the painting lately purchased for the nation, supposed to be by the same master. Joseph and the two Marys are about to lift the body of Christ into an arched cave-tomb, which is open to the right. Joseph supports the head. He is dressed in a kind of monkish costume, peaked cowl, &c. The group is completed by one of the Marys on each side supporting the body. The distance is filled up by Calvary, with the three Crosses, some trees, &c. I have shown the engraving to several collectors, but it appears (in answer to my inquiries) unknown, but not, perhaps, to some of your readers."

The Erie (American) Railway Company propose to illuminate their line at night by electric lights in the tunnels, on all dangerous curves, and on every engine. Electricity for use in illumination, is, according to Mr. E. C. Morse, who has charge of the scheme, to be obtained by the turning of the engine wheels. The engineer will, it is supposed, be able to see three miles ahead on the darkest night. The Erie company appears to be in disfavour with a portion of the American Press, for one of the Journals says, more welcome, however, than any announcement of material improvements would be a notification in the cause of public morality that the managers of this line could be brought to a condition of responsibility for the pecuniary claims of the shareholders. In this latter particular we in the Midlands can have no special interest. But we should like to see the new invention in use on our English railways.

NEWS OF THE MIDLANDS.

A Midland Co-operative's Conference is shortly to be held at Coventry.

Smethwick, with a population of 17,000, has no Market Hall.

The manager of a Nottingham lace warehouse has absconded with nearly £400.

A new market will be opened at Shrewsbury on the 2nd of October.

An effort is being made to revive the Welsh national Eisteddfod upon a "purely Welsh" basis.

The heat last week caused a cessation of work for a few hours daily at the Shelton Bar iron Works at Hanley.

The Hanley magistrates have fined John Owen, a collier, 20s. for indecently assaulting his married sister-in-law.

Mary Owen, a Leamington "unfortunate," fell down stairs last week when tipsy and died shortly afterwards.

Mr. S. Jordan, an innkeeper of Wolverhampton, has died in the Isle of Man from the effects of sea-sickness.

The Bishop of Lichfield is slowly improving in health, although he is still very weak. His lordis in the Peak district.

Unwisely, as it appears to us, the Darlaston people have refused, by a large majority, to adopt the Health of Towns' Act.

This is the eleventh week of the nailers' strike in Worcestershire; nor is there any chance of its being the last. Bread was given away to the distressed nailers' families at Reddal Hill and Hales Owen on Saturday.

The excitement attending the Dudley murder has not even yet been allayed. Midland Counties' readers will remember that a woman named Mary Burgess, of Wolverhampton, played rather a leading part in the case owing to certain statements reflecting upon her made by the convict Fanny Oliver. Burgess, who is the stepmother of John Burgess, with whom Mrs. Oliver had a *liaison*, writes to "give a broad, distinct, and unqualified denial to every statement made by the convicted woman having any reference to myself." Burgess declares she had no "hand or part in the correspondence or communion that existed between the unhappy woman Oliver" and John Burgess; she did not, she says, even know of Fanny Oliver's existence. As regards the convict herself, she is still at Worcester gaol; but the capital sentence having been commuted to penal servitude for life, she will shortly be removed to one of the convict prisons.

The introduction of sixty new hands from Bilston, Staffordshire, into the Sovereign Colliery, near Dodworth, South Staffordshire, has caused a serious riot. The old hands attacked the pits and the manager's house and broke the windows of the shops. Frightened out of their wits, the new hands fled. The rioters threw fire down the water pit, and two men who were in the shaft had a very narrow escape. The riot has been suppressed.

A singular discovery was made near Leicester on Sunday night. Three boys were blackberrying in a dyke on the roadside, when they found the dead body of a woman about fifty years of age, wearing a blue coloured hood, a black cap (the strings of which crossed her mouth), and very respectably clad. She was lying on her right side, with her face partly under the water. It was stated that the poor woman had been gagged, and, with her hands tied behind her, then thrown into the ditch; but, from the *post mortem* examination made on Monday by Dr. Nuttall, that could not have been the case, as the body presented no marks of violence, nor any trace of poisoning. Death seems to have been caused by suffocation, but how caused there is at present no evidence to show. The only conjecture is that the unfortunate woman must have mistaken the ditch side for the pathway (which is on the other side of the hedge) leading to the village of Anstey, and have fallen into the water, or that she had been foully dealt with by being thrown into the water and there held until suffocated, or that she committed self-destruction, which is hardly feasible considering the water was so shallow, and that the spot is but a short distance from the road-side. In deceased's pocket were six purses, most of them empty, a farthing and three half-farthings in money, a few "charms" and various odds and ends, such as are carried about by fortune-tellers. At the inquest an open verdict was returned.

The Trades' Union Congress at Birmingham, which had assembled on the previous Monday, concluded its sittings on Saturday. It was resolved to hold the next Congress in London, though a strong feeling existed in favour of Nottingham, where, it was argued, the Congress was fully reported in the newspapers. Papers were read by Mr. Watton (Brecon), on Direct Representation of Labour in Parliament; by Mr. Owen (the Potteries), on Working-class Newspapers; and by Mr. Bate (Secretary to the National Emigration Aid Society), on Emigration; Mr. Owen (the Potteries) had a paper ready on the subject of "Good from Hand," which he withdrew, as time was pressing, on the understanding that each delegate should bring the subject before his society and report thereon to Mr. Owen. The subject of the regulation of mines was discussed, and a resolution was unanimously adopted expressing the opinion of the Congress that the "great destruction of human life in the working of the coal, stone, and iron mines of the country, calls aloud for further legislation for the protection of the miners." A resolution was also carried recommending the International Working Men's Association to the support of all working men. Mr. Connolly (London) having announced his intention shortly to visit the United States to enquire into the condition of the working classes, Mr. Owen (Potteries) proposed, Mr. Doody (Birmingham) seconded, and it was resolved that the trades' unionists of America be requested to receive Mr. Connolly as a representative of the trades' unionists of Great Britain, and to afford him all the information in their power; and further, expressing the warmest goodwill to America on the part of the Congress. Votes of thanks were then passed to the Chairman, the Secretary, and the Press; and the Congress concluded its sittings. Mr. McRae (Secretary) announced that the expenses had been £12 17s.

The Oldbury people are about to purchase, for £300, the People's Hall for holding vestry and other meetings, and close the present inefficient building.

Two Nottingham labourers, Edward Burford and Thomas Barnes, were drowned on Sunday near the mouth of Faversham Creek, and the life of a third is despaired of.

The *Colliery Guardian* says in many places in the Midland coalfields, recent sinkings are developing rich coal-seams beneath rocky coverings which had previously forbidden the search. The results are very satisfactory.

The *Staffordshire Advertiser* says it is understood that a company is being formed to lease from the Marquis of Anglesea and work the mines under a considerable area on the Cannock Chase on the western side of the railway between Cannock and Rugeley.

At Mr. Sleigh's vineries, near the Orphanage, Goldthorn Hill, is to be seen one of the largest crops of grapes probably in all the Black Country. The grapes are Black Hamburghs, of which in one greenhouse there are 237 bunches.

A railway porter named Coates died at Dudley on Friday from the excessive heat. On the same day a labourer named Choyce was working in a field at Seagrave (Leicestershire) when he was struck by the sun, became raving mad, and died in two hours. Choyce leaves a wife and seven children. Samuel Warwick died at Leamington from the same cause on Friday.

"Conferences" are the fashion just now. One of these gatherings, at which miners will discuss their prospects, is announced for next Monday at Dudley. Delegates will attend from North Staffordshire, Derbyshire, East Worcestershire, and Staffordshire, as well as a deputation from Lancashire and North and South Wales.

A young girl named Lucy Stuart has just committed suicide at Hatherley, near Gloucester, under extraordinary circumstances. A rumour was in circulation that an improper intimacy existed between herself and a farmer, and effigies of the two had been carried round the village. She appears to have been so annoyed that she drank a quantity of blue vitrol. A verdict of *felo de se* was returned.

The Lord Chancellor has offered the rectory of St. Mary's, Stafford, vacant by the elevation of the Rev. Dr. Cowie to the bishopric of Auckland, to the Rev. Thomas Ross Finch, M.A., of Wadham College, Oxford, curate of Sonning, Berkshire. Two gentleman to whom his lordship had previously offered it—namely, the Hon. and Rev. A. Anson, M.A., vicar of St. Michael's, Handsworth, and the Rev. F. J. Wood, curate of St. Peter's, Leeds—refused it.

The Worcester Musical Festival will begin next Tuesday and last until Friday. The "Elijah," the "Hymn of Praise," Rossini's "Messe Solennelle," a new cantata "The Prodigal Son," by Mr. Arthur Sullivan," and the "Messiah" are included in the programme, and the principal singers are engaged. All the arrangements have been excellently made by Dr. Williams, M.D., Hon. Sec. On Friday evening a ball will wind up the Festival.

There have been some considerable fires in the district this week. On Tuesday a fire was discovered in the farmyard of "Holmes House," Bishop's Itchington. The yard is situated within fifty yards of the Great Western Kailway, between Harbury and Fenny Compton, and it is supposed that sparks from a passing engine must have ignited one of the hayricks, which was first found to be on fire. The Leamington and Southam fire-brigades did good service. Seven corn and hay ricks and the barn (which was full of wheat) were destroyed.—The scene of the fire will form one of our subjects for pictorial representation in our next number.

On the same night there was another fire at a farm between Ashchurch and Bredon, near Tewkesbury. Several ricks were destroyed.

The South Staffordshire Rifle Volunteers had their yearly prize-shooting on Monday at Bridgnorth. The following prizes were awarded: Sergeant Warner, Challenge Cup and Watch; Private Tomkins, Ladies' Prize, £5; Corporal Barber, £3; Captain Mathias, £2. 10s.; Private Wilfis, £2.; Private Morgan, £1 10s.; Sergeant Medcalf. £1; Private Meddings, £1; Private Horne, £1.; Corporal Westcott, £1; Corporal Jackson, £1; Private Suckley, £1; Private Jones, £1; Private Evans, 12s. 6d.; Corporal Cover, 10s.; Privates Walford and Wootton, 10s. divided; Private Bill, 7s. 6d.; Sergeant C. Medcalf, rifle; Private Browne, £1; Private Hand, 12s. 6d.; Private Piper, 7s. 6d. The company's Silver Medal, presented by Mr. Hubert Smith, to be won by the greatest number of times during the season, was awarded to Private Tomkins.

At the Leicester Town Hall, on Saturday, Annie Allen, a young woman of prepossessing appearance, was charged with attempting to commit suicide. Late on Friday night P.C. Fussell heard the girl talking excitedly with a young man. She ran towards the canal, and got out of his sight. Fussell proceeded in the direction of the sound, and found her on her bended knees on the canal brink evidently praying. The officer asked what was the matter, and she thereupon leaped into the water. He, however, succeeded in catching hold of her clothes, and with some difficulty pulled her out. The poor girl stated that she had been keeping company with the young man for five years, and that they had had some words. He had often promised her marriage, but had as often deceived her. On being remanded by the magistrates for a week she swooned.

At a large meeting of supporters of the South Staffordshire Hounds, held on Monday at Lichfield, the Earl of Shrewsbury and Talbot presiding, the financial statement of the Committee was submitted to the meeting, and in order to defray the liabilities of the hunt it was unanimously resolved that an adequate fund be at once provided irrespective of the annual subscriptions, to liquidate the charges still remaining on the property account, a considerable portion of the cost of which, in the shape of horses, hounds, plant and alterations to premises, has been provided out of last season's subscriptions. A subscription was at once entered into, and there was subscribed by the meeting the sum of £200, and a marked determination was evinced by those present to support the committee in continuing the hunt on a proper footing.

There is some talk of removing the Nelson column, which disfigures Trafalgar Square, to Greenwich.

For shooting eight partridges on the 26th ult., John Bloxham was on Wednesday fined £1 each bird and 14s. 6d. expenses, by the Leamington bench, and not being able to pay the fine he was sent to gaol for a month.

Both in France and America they are discussing the means of utilising the force now expended uselessly by the waves of the sea. It is proposed to carry out this extraordinary scheme by a machine consisting of a series of curved tubes which are so placed that the shock of the wave passes along their horizontal portion and sets in motion a column of liquid, which in its turn moves a series of pistons, and so transmits in any fashion that may be desired the force of the wave.

The Rev. T. Burgess, an Independent minister of Tamworth, has been charged before the local justices with "misdemeanour." Mr. Burgess had omitted to attend a meeting of the Tamworth Board of Guardians, to which he had been summoned for the purpose of answering certain questions with reference to a complaint against a relieving officer. The reverend gentleman, however, had explained the cause of his absence to the Poor Law Board, who directed no further steps to be taken in the case.

After the annual recess, the Theatre Royal, Birmingham, opened for the season, on Monday evening, with Offenbach's "Grand Duchess." The popular extravaganza is fresher and more lively than ever; it goes with an *élan* impossible to be improved upon. With bright, new dresses—quite as bright and new as those seen on the Paris or London stage—well painted scenery, and a capital company, its performance is more than usually effective. The singers under engagement to Mr. John Russell could not have been better chosen for the parts they have to fill. From constant practice together, they are one and all thoroughly acquainted with the whole work, the result being of necessity an excellent representation and a most complete *ensemble*. No "points" are lost, and the performance, in technical parlance, goes without a hitch. The prima donna, Miss Julia Mathews, has been called the English Schneider, and may, without flattery, be said to possess dramatic talent in every respect equal to that of the Parisian Grande Duchesse; while the superior advantages of youth and feminine grace are decidedly in her favour. Her voice is most sympathetic. She sings charmingly; a little more by-play, and her representation would be perfect. It has probably been quite so, before the fair artiste knew the part too well. Mr. Wilford Morgan has improved as Fritz, both in his singing and acting. Mr. Aynsley Cooke is irresistibly humorous, and the Paynes are as comical and active as heretofore. Mr. Stoyle makes the eccentricities of Prince Paul delightful, and Mdlle. Albertazzi plays Wanda with artless simplicity, singing the music of the part with very much artistic ability. The dancing of Mdlle. Esta and the elder Payne is characteristic, and gives effect to the can-can modified to suit English notions of decorum. Altogether, the "Grand Duchess" at the Theatre Royal is both musically and dramatically very admirably performed.

A romantic case of love and suicide and attempted murder is reported from Herefordshire this week. John Kinnersley, a young carpenter and wheelwright, had formed an acquaintance with a girl, named Sarah Jane Langford, the daughter of a well-to-do shoemaker at Kimbolton, near Leominster, which resulted in their being engaged to be married. Kinnersley had always evinced the strongest affection for his sweetheart, and on her leaving her native village some time since for a place of service at Hales Owen, he at the same time entered the Worcestershire constabulary, in order that he might be near her. In May she left her service, and returned home. Kinnersley, that he might still be near her, also left his appointment in the police force, and resumed his own trade in his sweetheart's village, and it was generally understood that they were in a short time to be married. Meanwhile, Langford had formed an acquaintance with the son of a farmer in the parish, with whom she had kept up a correspondence. Remonstrances seem to have been made to her by her old sweetheart, and it is said that she at length formally gave him up. Kinnersley became morose, and confessed to his mother that "it was all through his love for Sarah." On Saturday evening Kinnersley shot at his sweetheart and severely wounded her, the whole of the charge entering her body, and lodging in her neck, hands, and side, the girl escaping death by little short of a miracle. She was filling a flower-pot with earth, in the fold yard, and the shot was fired by Kinnersley from behind a fir-tree near the fold gate, a distance of about ten yards only from her. The girl, upon being shot, ran through the barn, and thence entered the homestead by the front door, passing out with her mother immediately after by the back door into the meadow behind the house. Kinnersley, having meantime reloaded the gun, followed closely after. By the time, however, that he had arrived at the gate leading into the meadow his sweetheart and her mother were half-way across on their way to a cottage for safety, and, therefore, out of gunshot. Kinnersley then placed the butt of the gun on the ground, leaned over the muzzle, and, placing his foot in a loop formed by a piece of string, pulled the trigger with his foot, and fell mortally wounded to the ground, the charge having entered his body just below his breast, and passed out at the back, about an inch from the spine. Dr. Boyce, of Leominster, was sent for, and, though he saw at the first glance that the case was hopeless, did what he could to relieve the poor fellow's intense suffering. Notwithstanding that his body, as described, was perfectly riddled by the shot, the unhappy man lingered on in great agony for nineteen hours, dying on Sunday afternoon. He remained perfectly sensible to the last, and stated before his death that "it was all through his love, and that it was his intention to kill himself, but not his sweetheart." An inquest was held at the house of the girl's father, on Tuesday morning, when the jury returned a verdict to the effect that the deceased committed suicide whilst labouring under temporary insanity. The girl is herself still very ill from the effects of her wounds, but her life is not despaired of.

AT THE PRIVATE VIEW.

Of what, prithee? At the private view of the Bearded Lady, the Boy after Esau's own heart, the Siamese Twins Chang and Eng, the Beautiful Circassian Lady, Miss Swan the Nova Scotian Giantess, the Celestial and huge-proportioned Chang, or the Fat Boy who measures ever so many yards round the waist? Or perhaps, says the intelligent reader, you have just returned from across the Channel, after a close and private inspection of the wretched mime who was found dead in the Seine the day after the grand Fête—his chill body yet covered with the ochre and crimson stripes in which he enacted that part of the savage which made him so famous. It may happen, you continue, speculative and surmisive as you are, O Midlander, proud of your smoke and dust, and furnaces that redden and gleam at night,—perchance you have been favoured with a private view of some of those extraordinary effusions received by Josiah Mason, the Philanthropist, from foreign lands, asking for dowries for the writers' daughters and small fortunes for themselves, both so easy for the illustrious gentleman—the beneficent founder of the Orphanage at Erdington—to bestow upon them: (they are for ever crying, these beggars, "Give, give!" like the horseleech's daughter); or it may have happened that you have been to a private view of the new Il—str—ted P—p—r, with its new writers, new artists, new engravers, new typographers, new engineers, new everything, even unto the very street in which it first sees the light this bright autumn day? No, sir; no, madam; no, younglady, with chignoned tresses and *piqué* dress looped-up to display your new shoes with the silver buckles of the Georgian era, and just the tiniest vestige of the whitest of st———. But to what point am I careering? Whither away, my gallant steed? as the poet sings; only for steed read pen. It was to none of these raree-shows that I was bidden. I was summoned to the Private View—attention! if you please, where Art is concerned—of the Autumn Exhibition of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists, which, or who, are holding on this present Saturday in the harvest month their select gathering.

By Diana, chaste huntress, a winsome sight! No, not the pictures, certainly not; if you imagine we are all here to see the canvasses spread around the place, then you are not worthy of a card for this P. V. Pictures, forsooth! Who cares for them to-day? We have come—to look at one another. Arouse ye, therefore, my merry men and maidens all, for of a truth this is the Artist's opening-day. And it is Fashion's opening day also. Should we arrange ourselves with so much trouble, and don that new dress, "but for the hope of something after?" Of course not, dear sir. And think you we would have pestered the pater for a cheque wherewith to obtain from Messrs Tiem and Fitt this Japanese silk, splendid to behold, of which you will see a profusion if you attend, as you ought to do, the Festival of the Three Choirs at Worcester, to hear Rossini's "Messe Solennelle," Sullivan's "Prodigal Son," and Barnet's "Ancient Mariner?"

Yes, to-day we are gathered together to look at ourselves.

> "—— Presume not God to scan;
> The proper study of mankind is man!"

And so, by parity of reasoning, the proper study of womankind is woman. Only I defy you to make such a line scan in hexameters or anything else.

* * * * *

I decline most respectfully, but courteously, to attempt a description of the costumes. I am not Jenkins of the *Morning Popgun* to stand near the door and jot down the fair creatures' dresses as each one enters; though I would fain possess the fluent millinerish pen of that very ready writer.

You know the mode as well as I could tell you. Therefore, of what avail would it be for me to drum into your unwilling ears what was worn, or, if you like, what was not worn? On second thoughts, though, you may be as ignorant of the costumes as all other males are supposed to be: in which dilemma, turn to the pleasant pages of *Le Follet*, where you will find it all written.

* * * * *

"*Dear* Georgie—How *glad* I am to see you. How *good* it was of you to send us those *beautiful* grapes and *delicious* peaches. We *did* so enjoy them, love! Going so *soon*, dear! why you have not been here more than three hours, I'm sure. You must? Good-bye, then—*Good-bye*, dear."

* * * * *

"By Jove! old man, I'd have given a trifle for one of those kisses that Emmy lavished so freely upon that little nuisance of a Woodpecker. What! might leave some of the bloom of her lips upon my face! Cynic—avaunt! Spoons? Well, yes, perhaps I am. And you mean to tell me that you have never been sweet on a girl in all your life?

> 'Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
> Who never to himself hath said,
> 'This is my own, my only love?'"

I beg Sir Walter's pardon for mis-quoting him, but—Oh, I say, Freddy, old boy, she's beckoning me to come to her. Wait for me outside."

* * * * *

"Good Ged! 'ow 'ot it is 'ere! Me and the old woman 'ave bin jammed hup in that corner for the last hour, and not so much as a morsel to eat or a drop to wet our whistles! Reminded me of what Shakespeer ('tis Shakespeer's, ain't it?) says—

> "Water, water everywhere,
> And not a drop to drink."

Not 'crect in my kwotation, did you say, Mr. Penwipe. Wot is it then, sir, if I may make so bold as to ask?"

"What Coleridge—not Shakespeare, Mr. Shuttle—wrote was:—

> 'Water, water everywhere,
> And all the boards did shrink;
> Water, water everywhere,
> Nor any drop to drink!'"

"Wot a thing it is to be littery, missis, aint it! Now I'll bet tuppence that chap, for all 'is white face and eyes sunk so deep that you can't see 'em, is up to a thing or two. Shouldn't wonder if 'ee don't know Mister Shakespeare and Mister Coleridge theirselves!"

* * * * *

"You know, Emmy, you said you'd write."

"Poor boy! and did he expect a nice, nice little letter, then? And was he disappointed? Now, boy, don't sulk, or I shall go home at once and not speak to you again—until next time * * Don't, don't, *don't!* you must not press my hand in that way. There's one of my glove-buttons gone, and mamma is looking at us! Good-bye, dear—remember next Monday; the garden-party, don't you know."

* * * * *

The Pictures? Oh, ah, yes; you see I forgot them; there's always so much spooning on a day like this. And *She* had so much to say * * * Why there goes the carriage, and she is kissing her hand, and has dropped a flower for me. Thanks, thanks, I'm sure; sorry to give you so much trouble. *Will* you allow me to pass, Sir? Ah, *ma petite*, I will keep this red, red rose in the casket of my heart until the flowers bloom again next summer-time, when the stephanotis wreath shall not be dearer to us both.

* * * * *

Oh, look here. If you want to know anything about the Pictures, and don't mind waiting a few days, you shall have a full, true, and particular account of them.

Au revoir.

NOVELTIES FROM ABROAD.

Alloy of Iron and Zinc.—Iron, it is known, will dissolve in melted zinc, but the conditions of this alloy have not yet been ascertained scientifically; it is not known what proportion of iron the zinc will take up. An accident which happened in Germany may possibly lead to the settlement of this question. An iron pot had been used to melt zinc in for several days, when it was noticed that a metallic deposit had formed at the bottom. This went on increasing until it interfered with the melting, and the deposit was got out, and it fell by accident into the hands of a chemist named Ondemons, who found the alloy to be of a fine white colour, quite different from zinc, of great tenacity, and with a brilliant fracture; it contains about $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of iron.

Method of giving a Good Face to Bronze.—The oxidation of statues and other articles in bronze has always been a matter of uncertainty, while the changes which take place in the appearance of such works either greatly improve or deteriorate works of art. Many bronzes exposed to the action of the air of towns frequently assume an unpleasant blackness which makes them resemble cast-iron rather than bronze. The Berlin Society for the Encouragement of Industry has, during the last five years, made many experiments in the oxidation of bronze. An immense number of experiments have been made on oxydised coins and other objects, and one fact said to be arrived at is that the composition of the metal has little to do with the colour of the oxidation. It has been observed, at the same time, that, in the case of public monuments in bronze, those parts which were within reach of the public fingers became admirably coloured, while the other portions became black and unsightly, hence the idea that the *patine*, as the French call this oxydation, was the result of the *patinage*, or, in plain English, pawing, an inference very difficult to admit in many cases. However, following this indication, experiments have been for some years with bronze busts placed in the open air, and it has been found that those which were washed daily became of an unsightly dark colour, while others which were oiled once a month, the oil being simply wiped off with a woollen rag, became of a magnificent tone. The experiment is certainly worth repeating.

Bath for heating Copper, Brass, &c., with Platinum.—The following is given as the composition of a good bath for electro-plating metals with platinum:—In a solution of chloride of platinum sprinkle finely-powdered carbonate of soda, until bubbles of carbonic acid gas cease to appear; add to this solution of equal quantities of glucose and sea salt, until the coating of platinum loses all blackness and becomes of the natural colour of the metal. The advantage of this bath is that it may be concentrated to any degree, and thus maintained for a long time. The articles to be plated are placed in a pierced zinc receptacle, and the bath heated to about 140 deg.; after a few moments the articles are withdrawn, washed, and dried in sawdust.

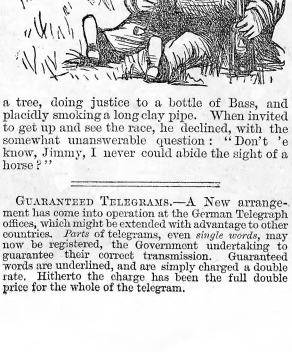
A New Cement.—Equal quantities of finely-powdered glass, peroxyde of manganese, sifted and carefully powdered zinc white, are said to form a cement which, applied when fresh, hardens immediately and resists red heat as well as boiling water.

NOTES ON THE JOURNALS.

Newspaper readers will have noticed the shocking death at Paris of an unfortunate lion tamer named Lucas. He entered the lions' den as usual, and was attacked by the animals so fiercely that although he got out of the cage, with the assistance of a bystander, he died soon after. Every wild beast tamer will tell you that he owes a great deal of his influence to his eye. Never remove your gaze from the animal, is the beast tamer's creed. Lucas, we may presume, had previously acted upon this rule; but on the occasion of his last performance with the lions he was thrown off his guard by the "singular beauty of a young girl, whose expression of terror and anxiety fascinated him." His eyes wandered from the lions to the young lady, and a lioness, perceiving the tamer's attention was withdrawn from her leonine companions and herself, sprang on him, and tore him to the ground. Lucas had usually carried a loaded cane with him, but on the day he was attacked he had only a small riding whip in his hand. He was powerless, and was carried from the den fainting and fatally torn. We question if the influence obtained by certain men over lions and other wild animals is the result of that constant watchfulness which is said to have cost poor Lucas his life. Lion-tamers generally train the whelps when they are docile, and subdue them by exercising great patience and firmness. But, which ever way we look at it, this description of exhibition is on a par with the displays of the ancients, and should be discouraged.

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe tells in *Macmillan's Magazine* for September what she terms "The True Story of Lady Byron's Life," and, as a matter of course, the papers are reprinting portions of it in their yawning columns. Mrs. Stowe, as was perhaps to be expected in a lady writer, endeavours to throw the whole of the fault upon Lord Byron, against whom she brings a perfectly horrible charge. When Byron first proposed to Miss Milbanks, whom he ultimately married, she declined his offer, but they remained good friends. Then, says Mrs. Stowe, "from the height which might have made him happy as the husband of a noble woman, he fell into the depths of a secret adulterous intrigue with a blood relation, so near in consanguinity that discovery must have been utter ruin and expulsion from civilised society." Who is meant here? "A blood relation!" Mrs. Stowe leaves us to guess at or imagine the person implicated in the amour; but having gone the length of accusing Byron of, if it be true, so shameful an intrigue, she might, one would think, have made her True Story complete by furnishing the world with the name of the lady immediately concerned in the affair. According to Mrs. Stowe, Lady Byron, "in a manner which left no room for doubt, saw the full depth of the abyss of infamy which her marriage was expected to cover, and understood that she was expected to be the cloak and the accomplice of this infamy." This she resisted, and became odious to her husband, who, when their child was born, drove Lady Byron from the house. Before she left, her ladyship went to Byron's room to wish him 'good-bye," and stopped on the threshold to caress his favourite spaniel, and to wish she were as humble as that dog, that she might only be allowed to remain and watch over him. In the room were Byron and "the partner of his sins" sitting together. Her ladyship said, "Byron, I come to say good-bye," offering at the same time her hand. Lord Byron put his hands behind him, retreated to the mantelpiece, and, looking round on the three that stood there, with a sarcastic smile said, "When shall we three meet again?" Lady Byron answered, "In heaven, I trust." And those were her last words to him on earth. If it be true, and there is reason to believe it is, a more terrible story was never recorded.

How many people go to races for a holiday, and for that only? Our experience of Sutton Park, Worcester, Nottingham, and Derby leads us to believe that the great majority of people who go to these summer meetings, are simply bent on a day out. For the sake of morality we wish the number were increased by a large addition from those who bet. But in the interests of racing itself and the breed of horses, we would rather see more ardent sportsmen than the gentleman of whom a writer on Alexandra Park races tells the following story. I was greatly taken with one old gentleman, whose humour seemed to me to be irresistible. He sat with his back to the course, comfortably propped against a tree, doing justice to a bottle of Bass, and placidly smoking a long clay pipe. When invited to get up and see the race, he declined, with the somewhat unanswerable question: "Don't 'e know, Jimmy, I never could abide the sight of a horse?"



Guaranteed Telegrams.—A New arrangement has come into operation at the German Telegraph offices, which might be extended with advantage to other countries. *Parts* of telegrams, even *single words*, may now be registered, the Government undertaking to guarantee their correct transmission. Guaranteed words are underlined, and are simply charged a double rate. Hitherto the charge has been the full double price for the whole of the telegram.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Twelve human skulls have been discovered in a house at Shadwell.

The Emperor Napoleon has recovered from the affection in the knee from which he had suffered.

The will of the late Lord Stanley of Alderley was proved under £70,000 personalty.

Colonel Tighe, of Woodstock, County Kilkenny, munificently offers to place £10,000 in the hands of the new Church body.

The *Morning Advertiser* has reason to believe that on the assembling of Parliament one of the first subjects which will be brought before the house will be the unconditional release of all the political prisoners without exception.

The meeting of the British Association will be held next year at Liverpool under the presidency of Professor Huxley.

A Mrs. Major Briscoe has been behaving outrageously at Exeter, appearing in the streets with her clothes disordered and a sword in her hand.

Twenty missionaries, amongst whom is supposed to be a French priest, have been murdered in the province of Szechuen (China).

The Suez Canal is to be opened on the 17th of November. The depth of the Canal is 8 metres, equal to 26 English feet.

General Codrington is said to have breakfasted at St. Cloud, and to have found the brevet of Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour in his napkin.

A little girl, daughter of Mr. Hutchinson, Colwick Wood Farm. Nottingham, died suddenly on Saturday, it is supposed from eating poisonous berries.

The foot and mouth disease in cattle is reported to be spreading in Surrey, Essex, Kent, Bucks, Berks, Warwick. Chester, Durham, Northumberland, and Lancashire.

Dr. Lanigan, a dispensing physician at Kilmeaden, about six miles from Waterford, shot his wife on Friday evening in the dining room of his house, and then blew his brains out.

The Russian clergy purpose to get up a Council at St. Petersburgh, presided over by the Emperor and attended by Bishops of the Greek Church; this is in opposition to the Œcumenical Council at Rome.

On Sunday there were two Fenian gatherings in London in celebration of the anniversary of the "Siege of Limerick." The women displayed the "green" on their dresses.

Miss Charlotte Cushman, the once-celebrated tragic actress, has been obliged to retire from her profession owing to ill health. She has gone to Glasgow to consult the eminent surgeon, Dr. Simpson. Miss Cushman passes a considerable portion of her time at Malvern.

According to the *Epoca* (Madrid paper), Prince Augustus of Portugal, brother of the present King, is the most probable candidate for the Spanish throne. The Prince would marry a daughter of the Duc de Montpensier.

Ann Elizabeth Rixan was shot dead on Friday, whilst picking up lead at the Rifle Range of the West Middlesex Rifle Volunteers, Wormwood Scrubs. When Deceased's sister told a volunteer he had shot her sister, the fellow said, "served her right!" The inquest has been begun and adjourned.

The little village of Chawleigh has been almost totally destroyed by fire. Twenty-one dwelling-houses were burnt. The fire broke out in a carpenter's shop. Most of the property belongs to the Earl of Portsmouth and the Chawleigh Charity. The total damage is £4,000.

A young man, unknown, threw himself from the Clifton (Bristol) Suspension Bridge, on Saturnight, and met with a terrible death. The bridge is 245 feet above high-water mark, and the low-water point, upon which the suicide fell, 20 feet below. A 'busman states that the deceased told him he came from Sheffield.

The International Boat-race was rowed on Friday afternoon over the Thames Championship course. The Harvard crew got off with the lead, which they kept for some distance, when Oxford drawing up with their steady swinging stroke, passed them and finished at Barnes Bridge four lengths in front. Time, 22 min. 18 sec.

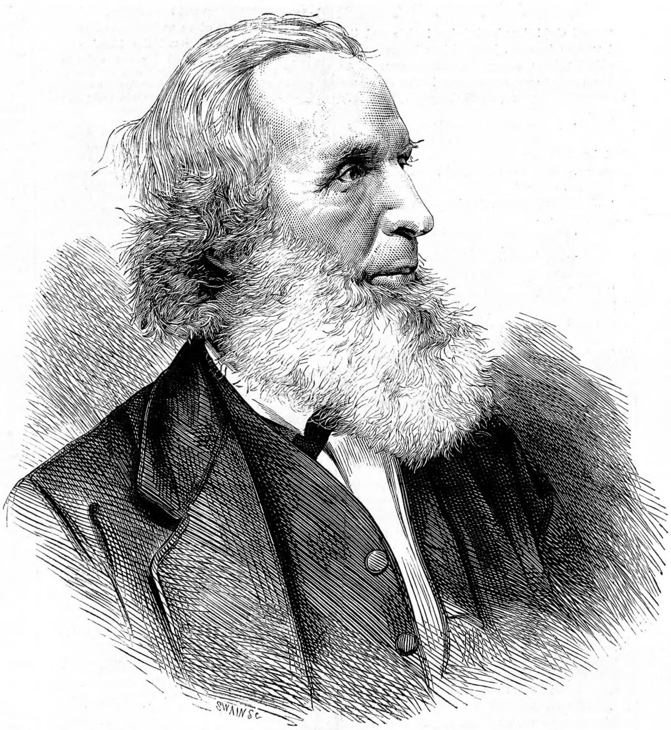
An Enquiry has been held at Warrington into the conduct of the Rev. James Cheale, vicar of Holy Trinity, St. Helen, who was charged with having committed adultery with one of his parishioners, a woman named Ellen Abbott. It was announced that a *prima facie* case, requiring an answer on the part of the defendant had been established.

On Friday the thermometer registered $88\frac{3}{4}$ deg. in the shade, and 89 deg. on the previous day. Saturday was not an exceptional day as regards the intense heat which had prevailed for more than a week; but on Sunday there was a sudden change—rain in the early morning, and a high wind all the day. Last year the greatest heat was 90 deg., on July 22.

BULL-FIGHTING ON VELOCIPEDES.

As if anything were wanting to increase the danger and excitement of a bull-fight, velocipedes have been introduced into the arenas where these discreditable exhibitions take place. The engraving represents a scene in the arena at Nimes. Velocipedes are certainly preferable to horses, whose sufferings under such circumstances are often horrible to witness. On their bicycles, the skill of the toreadors must be tested to the utmost.

They who find it difficult to to ride a velocipede when undisturbed by any greater obstacle than is found in the peculiar construction of the vehicle, will appreciate the tact and presence of mind necessary to guide it in the face of such an antagonist as an infuriated bull. The slightest accident is death or the cause of injury worse than death. If thrown, the toreador cannot so easily disentangle himself from the velocipede as from a horse, whose body moreover frequently protects him from the bull, to whose attacks he now is immediately exposed. The danger of the encounter is therefore considerably increased, but only to the disadvantage of those who enter upon it voluntarily, if that be any set-off against the barbarity of the entertainment.



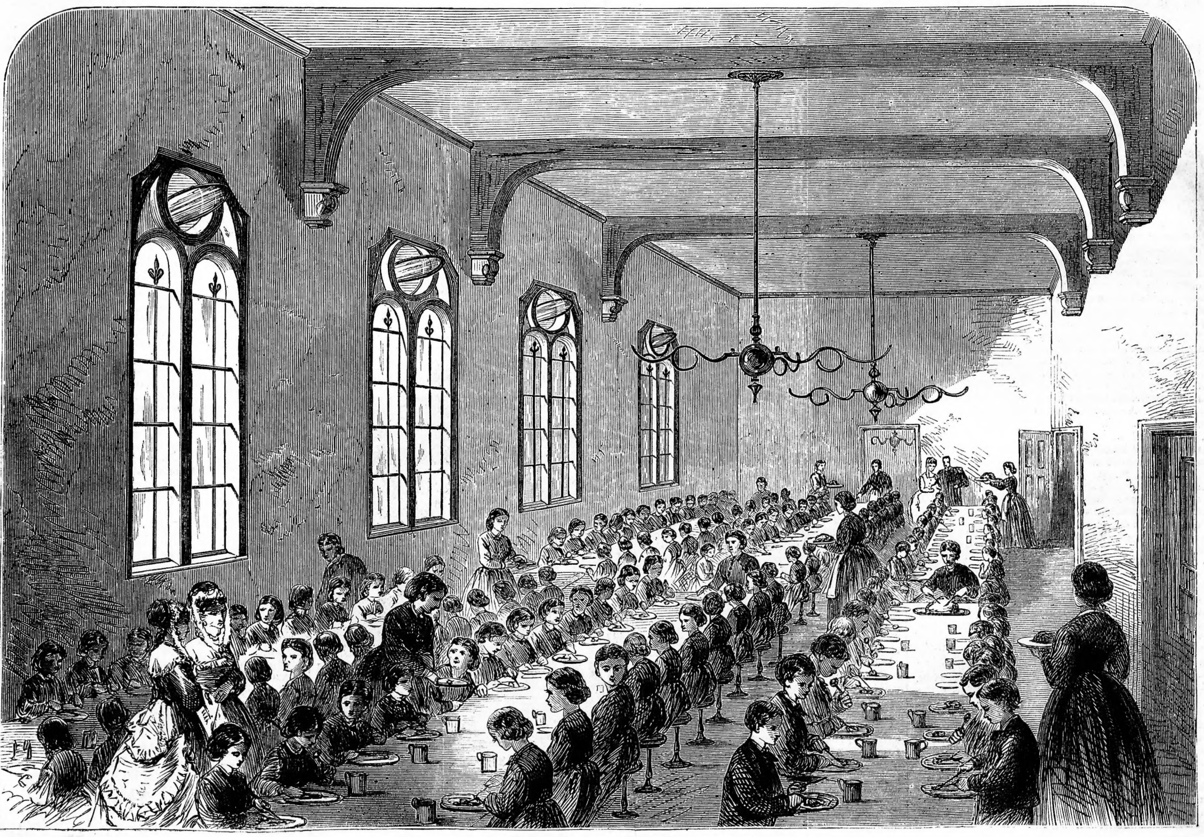
JOSIAH MASON. *(See page 2.)*

THE FETE OF THE TWO NAPOLEONS.

Paris awoke to a general, *bonâ-fide* holiday on the 15th of August; two anniversaries were to be celebrated, and although the centenary of Napoleon 1st. was so subtly introduced into the usual programme of the grand annual festival, that one would have been perplexed to say to the honour of which Napoleon to ascribe this or that amusement, yet this did not, in the least, disturb the main fact that it was a thorough holiday. Heavy excursion trains had panted into the city bringing huge reinforcements of provincial visitors; frank, round-faced peasants with bright kindly eyes, poured in from quaint Alsatia; the women in black velvet caps embroidered in gold and beads, and surmounted with great bows of broad ribbon tied on the top of the head, with streamers floating down to the waist. The coquetry of all feminine Alsatia lies in these ribbons; those two cooks who are crying with delight at seeing their sister, whom they have had up from Alsatia for the fêtes, will give her a ten franc piece on seeing her off again three days later, with instructions to buy herself the most beautiful set of ribbons in all Saverne. Now this ten franc piece is a heavy draught on their wages, and, moreover, they pay for their sister's railway ticket and treat her with a cab from the station, and take her to the circus and to the *café chantant*, and fill her baskets with presents for the *pater* and the *mater* and the little girl at home, and add a couple of their own bright coloured petticoats to her wardrobe, and yet, after all this expenditure, the sister must still take the gold piece to get herself the broadest brightest ribbons in Alsatia. These two peasant born servants, with the rosy cheeked brother who helps in the treat, are a touching type of the country poor of France, who come up to work in the great city, helping each other, meanwhile buying, bit by bit, a vineyard and some strips of land in their *pays*, looking forward to the time when they "will retire upon their economice," that is to say return to their wooden shoes and the contemplation of a bit of land really their own.

But we have wandered far from the excursionists who came pouring into the streets of Paris, where everything had a dash of tricolor about it; tricolor flags decking the public buildings, on the shops and boulevards, nodding over the patient noses of the little, shambling cab-horses, and on the *Impériale* of the omnibuses. At six o'clock in the morning the noisy little guns at the Hotel des Invalides woke to action the ardent excursionists, who went clattering down stairs from high-perched sleeping quarters. But early as they were, they were not the first pleasure-seekers on foot; the rising sun found narrow, compact crowds stretching here and there, snake-like, along the pavements. Full performances were to be given at one o'clock in all the theatres. The grand opera was the great point of attraction; it was there the blouses gathered earliest; the Rue le Pelletier looked like a gipsy camp in the misty morning. The bravest stood erect, others were sitting, or flung at full length, on the pavement where they slumbered peacefully. A brisk business was carried on in hot coffee, tobacco and cigars; there was plenty of laughing and rough joking but no pushing or violence; those who arrived first stood first; a few police sufficed to keep order among these street *dilettanti*, who contentedly waited eight and nine hours to hear Meyerbeer's "Huguenots" sung, and see the ballet dancers pirouette upon the great stage. As the hour approached the crowd rallied and pressed together. The vanguard, as the doors flew open, was composed of a blue blouse and a ragged white coat; the multitude was let in by detachments; a dazzled look upon the glittering lights, and then many, upon whom the force of habit was strong, rushed up into the galleries; but the blue blouse and the ragged coat plunged into the biggest box on the first tier and flung themselves into two arm-chairs in the front. In a few minutes the house was crammed from floor to ceiling; the boxes, in which only one front row of seats was left, were filled with standing spectators, as many as forty being crammed into one seat of six places. Yet not a shriek nor a skirmish; it was a glorious crowd. And now a woman and two children were pressed into a corner, unable to see, and the valiant white and blue offer them their hard-won arm-chairs. The two have stood since sunrise; they can well stand until the end of the performance The blue blouse, however, soon finds a seat upon the balustrade, and lets his feet dangle over the aristocratic gildings. If the choruses and ballet were loudly applauded; if Faure was immoderately cheered, the enthusiasm amounted to madness when Madame Carvalho's exquisite voice arose, sending a thrill of delight through the house; our gipsies showed they could not only applaud but appreciate too, and the singers made every effort to deserve what they felt to be a splendid triumph.

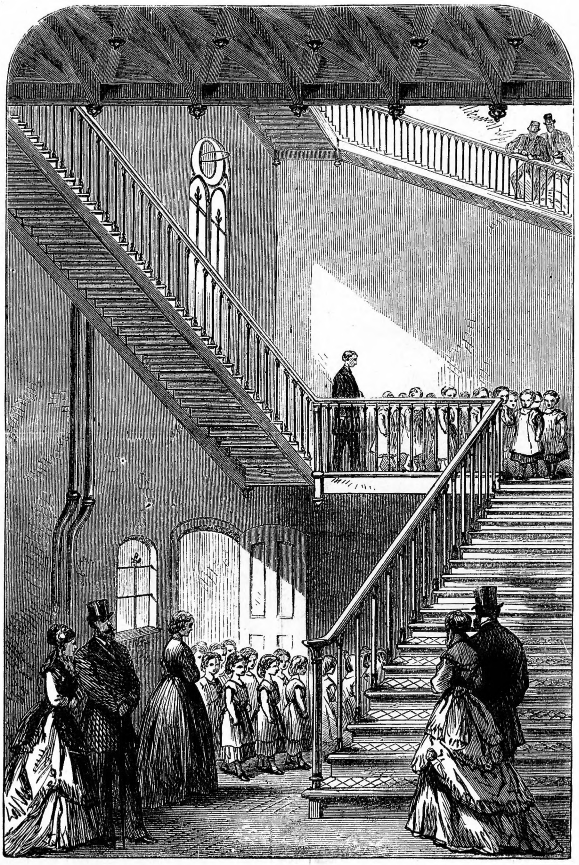
Meanwhile, there were thousands on foot in Paris. Glorious masses were sung in all the churches, ending with the splendid Te Deum, and from these the people streamed along the quays towards the great Champ de Mars, where, but a short time ago, rose the buildings and gardens of the great Exhibition. The quays and bridges were black with people gazing down upon the river, on which white flannel jacket and tricolor, in needle-pointed boats and slender canoes, were shooting to and fro. There were shouting and cheering, paddling and rowing, much that was incomprehensible to the elevated audience, seventy-four gold and silver medals to be carried off—in a word, a grand regatta. On arriving at the Champ de Mars one found oneself amidst a triple row of prettily painted stalls, uniform in colour, wherein a varied sale of provisions fluctuated round a steady business of "*pain*, *vin*, and *saucisson*." These seemed the watchwood of the day; there were, also, cider and Strasbourg beer, piles of fruit, halfpenny ices, oriental sweetmeats sold by Algerian Jews, and Montpelier cakes made in large rings, some two feet in breadth, but at every step one was sure to fall in again with "bread, wine, and sausage." Tables covered with white cloths were set out for the consumption of these delicacies, several of the stalls being converted into green bowers with masses of fern leaves. Hard by stood a huge open stage, on which a grand military pantomime was being performed to an unlimited audience. But at the moment when the hero, after snatching a hasty kiss from his wife and child, was putting to flight a body of enemies in a manner equally rapid and valiant, a round of cheers caused the spectators to face suddenly round; a successful blouse had just reached the summit of a slippery pole, and not content with seizing the silver watch, which dangled amidst the prizes, had victoriously secured the flag that surmounted the whole. A second open stage alternated its performances with the first, and on two others, very tastefully set up, well executed feats in the shape of tumbling and tight rope



THE ORPHANAGE AT ERDINGTON.—THE DINING HALL. *(See page 2.)*

dancing were performed by acrobats and ballet girls in exceedingly bright and pretty dresses. All these were governmental, and were smart, fresh and regular accordingly, but individual fancy flourished in wild luxuriance amidst the booths on the opposite side of the esplanade. Treading one's way amongst swings, conjurors' tables, games of innumerable kinds, big tent ball rooms, where there was to be dancing all night, and roundabouts, in which an organ and man flew round with the rest, grinding away together at the March in Faust, with constitutions evidently inaccessible to giddiness, one arrived before a booth in which "Jeanne d'Arc," a spectacle in three acts, was to be enacted. The heroic Maid of Orleans, in brilliantly burnished breastplate, gauntlets, and greaves, and a really handsome tunic, was touting for customers on the exterior platform, surrounded by dingy soldiers, and the wicked English with furiously painted faces; national hatreds were forgotten, however, for the moment, for the Duke of Bedford was doing a bit of comic with the clown. More shows in which all the horrors of humanity seemed to be carefully represented, then a pleasanter sight as a cavalcade of beautiful white horses galloped through the crowd, the foremost mounted by an old man in a George the Fourth dress, and most supercilious priggish air ever man wore, the others by huntsmen in green doublets, women riders in trailing skirts, a couple of clowns, and a little bit of a girl *amazone*, in a blue habit, who managed her restive little pony to perfection. These all belonged to the circus, which was just publishing its brilliant programme, with great flourish of trumpets, to the crowd. And all went on together to the sound of drums and noisy music, until the sun went down, the illuminations shone forth and the first rockets shot up into the air. There were two fine displays of fireworks on the opposite side of Paris. Among the set pieces was an Imperial fire temple bearing the name of Napoleon, and the dates 1769—1869. Two bouquets of fireworks flanked it, and behind fell a cascade of light on the grand bouquets, in some of which ten thousand rockets shot up together into a gigantic sheaf of golden corn, sprinkled with gorgeous cornflowers. All the illuminations of the city were in gas. Garlands and clusters of white lamps stretched down the avenue of the Champs Elysées and spread over the great place, at the end, in a labyrinth of light, beneath which the water of the great fountains looked exquisite, as it fell sparkling into the brilliant, light-encircled basins. An original feature were huge flames of gas which flared, on stands, like gigantic and gorgeous torches, at the entrance of the Tuileries gardens, casting a weird light upon the passing faces, and lighting up into almost a terrific expression the swarthy faces of the fiery-eyed Turcos, in their eastern dress, who were on guard there. The architecture of the public buildings was all traced out in lines of gas, the domes of the churches were covered with light, and, more brilliant than all, the Arc de Triomphe wore round its broad brow the names of the First Napoleon's battles in letters of fire, below which hung banners in tricolor fire, and lower a circle of chandeliers, while above blazed a great Imperial crown and the name of "Napoleon."

And lo! on a sudden, the countless lights were eclipsed, and the vast crowds hid themselves away.



THE ORPHANAGE AT ERDINGTON.—THE PRINCIPAL STAIRCASE. *(See page 2.)*

THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION.

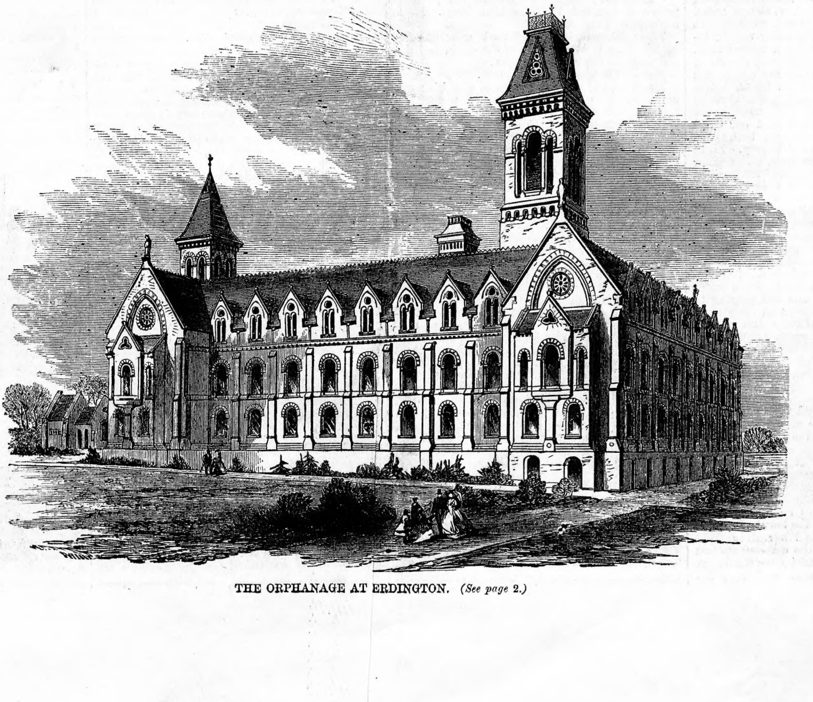
At this time anything like a detailed notice of the Exhibition of Arts and Manufactures at Molyneux House, Wolverhampton, would appear rather out of place; for nearly four months have passed since the Exhibition began, and its multifarious contents have been fully and well described by the local newspapers.

All Staffordshire, to say nothing of the adjoining counties of Worcestershire, Warwickshire, &c., has probably visited the Exhibition, which was opened on the 11th of May with an imposing and interesting ceremony, taken part in by the Members of Parliament for the county and borough, the mayor and corporation of Wolverhampton, invited mayors of towns (Birmingham, Worcester, and Kidderminster sending their mayoral representatives), the Bishop of Lichfield, the Earl of Lichfield (President of the Association), Earl Granville, Lord Wrottesley, Mr. Foley (ex-member for South Staffordshire), the local yeomanry and volunteers, &c. At Molyneux House, to which several thousand visitors had been attracted by the unusual ceremony, the Old Hundredth was sung by the choir and company, and the Bishop of Lichfield said an appropriate prayer. Lord Lichfield briefly introduced Earl Granville, and Mr. N. N. Solly, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee, read an address to Earl Granville, to which the noble lord replied in an elaborate speech of inauguration, which was followed by a concert and luncheon.

A brief *resumé* of the contents of the Exhibition will be interesting for future reference. One of the most interesting cases is that containing "the Abyssinian trophy," which includes the crown worn by King Theodore at his coronation at Axum. The art portion of the Exhibition is very complete for a collection of this kind, South Kensington having largely contributed of its treasures for the gratification of the Black Country. The manufactures of South Staffordshire, chiefly metallic, are well represented; there are *papier maché* and japanned ware; locks and keys of cunning make; cabinet work and furniture of every description; electric bells; "patch" boxes—a Bilston *specialité;* the Jacquard loom; glass blowing; very fine examples of Flemish and German stoneware of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries; cheap ornamental pottery produced in France, and purchased by the Department of Science and Art at the Paris Exhibition in 1867; drawings (forty in number) executed for the Arundel Society's publications; original designs of mosaics in the arcades of the South Kensington Museum by E. Crowe, F. Leighton, &c.

The purpose of the Exhibition is "the industrial instruction of the artizans of South Staffordshire," an intention which we trust will be completely carried out.

Mr. Bidlake, of Wolverhampton, has the credit of designing the building, which we engrave on our first page; and Mr. F. Talbot is the energetic Secretary, whose ability has contributed to the success of the exhibition.



THE ORPHANAGE AT ERDINGTON. *(See page 2.)*

A REPORTING MACHINE.

How shorthand writers manage to take down every word that is uttered by a speaker is to most people little less than marvellous. The writing of the shorthand characters is, however, only half the battle; it is in their transcription into "copy" that the chief difficulty lies. Then it is that where a rapid speaker has had to be reported the skill of the reporter shows itself most completely. Of course the speed at which a man speaks has a good deal to do with getting "a good note" of his remarks. A speaker may have a mind well stored with matter worth the hearing, and yet convey his thoughts in almost an unintelligible manner—humming and hawing like a schoolboy delivering his first recitation. He may stuff his speech with statistics, quotations from foreign and the dead languages, with all of which the reporter is expected to have sufficient acquaintance to understand, and ability to commit to paper and afterwards transcribe. Or he may have an extraordinary flow of language and great rapidity of utterance, too often fatal qualities, as he only discovers when he reads the newspaper reports of his speech. Some speakers talk at the rate of 300 words a minute, severely taxing the reporter's powers; whilst others content themselves with the more moderate utterance of 100, 120, 150, 200, and 250 words per minute. An efficient reporter will take down every word of the fastest speaker, no matter what the subject of his remarks may be; and we are therefore at a loss to know why M. Gensoul has gone to the trouble of inventing a "stenographic press,"—in other words, a reporting machine. This press is worked by a person who, applying his finger to the keys of what resembles the keyboard of a pianoforte, really prints the words as they are spoken on a strip of paper which rolls along underneath. An account of the invention appears in the *Mechanic's Magazine*, from which we gather that the keyboard is divided into three parts of eight keys each. On the left side, which is worked by the four fingers of the left hand, are printed signs representing initial consonants; final consonants are printed on the right by the fingers of the right hand; and the medium vowels are printed, by the two thumbs, in the middle. A London contemporary, describing the reporting machine, says of it: "M. Gensoul's system renders it unnecessary to transcribe the copy. Just as with the phonetic system, if legibly written, the compositor can set up the speech in common type, from the printed slip furnished by the machine." In one or two cases we are aware that carefully-trained compositors have received shorthand notes from the reporter and have set them up after the vowels have been filled in; but the exceptions to this are so overwhelming as almost to warrant us in saying that it is never done. The reporter takes down the words of the speaker in shorthand, transcribes them in an abbreviated longhand according to the length required by his editor, and the compositor finds little or no difficulty in deciphering the hurriedly-written "slips." Clearly, M. Gensoul's machine would be of not the least service except for verbatim reporting; and it is the easiest part of a shorthand-writer's arduous labours to write out his notes in the first person singular, without the trouble of condensing. We see no probability of this machine being of any service to newspaper men.

MIDLAND EXPORTS TO AMERICA.

Country readers perhaps are not aware of the immense trade that has been done with the United States by the Midland Counties in which they live. In 1866, the Midlands sent to America articles upon which a duty was paid of £1,063,311. This, however, is exclusive of the large quantity of goods supplied to American purchasers direct from the local manufactories; in the following instance, all the invoices passed the Birmingham Consulate. Those articles, manufactured in Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, and in Birmingham, comprised fishing tackle, hardware, cutlery, steel and iron, pearl and other buttons, watches and materials, carpeting and rugs, cotton fittings, boot web and materials, silk goods, glass, magic wire, pens and holders, silver and plated wares, jewellery and fancy goods, jet goods, chains, hoes and scythes, papier maché, guns and materials, saddlery, needles, thimbles, hooks and eyes, spectacles, hair and hairpins, tin plates, chandeliers, nickel and cobalt, beads and gimp goods, anvils, vices and nails, books and clothing, and "sundries," amounting to £74,065. Of the above articles, the hardware, cutlery, steel, and iron were valued at £471,559, by a far larger figure than any of the others. Then come chains, £64,600; guns and other sporting materials, £59,664; carpeting and rugs, £58,754; needles increased the total amount by £54,723; and the jewellery and fancy goods were worth £53,326. Since 1866 there has been a serious falling off in the Midland exports to America. In 1867 the total value of the articles upon which duty was paid was reduced to £771,448, and last year the amount further fell to £558,108. But even this is not so bad as it was in 1865, when the total sum was only £542,113. The hardware goods show the principal decline; for whereas they amounted to £471,559 in the year 1866, and £288,324 in 1867, they were only £163,865 last year. The decline in three years in this one item has been more than £300,000. There is a large decrease in the exports of silk goods, jewellery, guns, chain, agricultural tools, and tin plate; but the account shows an increase in pearl and other buttons, boot web and materials, and saddlery. The restrictive American tariff is given as the cause of this decline of trade, which Sheffield has experienced as well as Birmingham and districts.

THE will of the late Mr. W. Moore, of Staffordshire, has been proved under £70,000.

THE Wolverhampton magistrates are apparently resolved to do what they can to put down the "betting-office" nuisance. The justices, who had previously inflicted heavy fines upon other offenders at the last races in that town, have fined Charles Crook, of Walsall, £20 and costs, or four months' imprisonment, besides making him enter into a bond of £200, and two sureties in £100 each. Mr. Bartlett, who defended Crook, gave notice of appeal, and denounced the latter part of the magistrates' decision as "monstrous."

SPECIAL NOTICES.

Wholesale Agents for The Illustrated Midland News are being appointed in every town in the kingdom. Terms, and full particulars, may be learnt on application at the Office, 108, New Street, Birmingham.

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Agent for the Continent—M. Mellier, 17, Rue Séguier, Paris.

EFFIE.

A STORY IN THREE PARTS.

BY WALTER MAYNARD.

PROLOGUE.

The night mail train for Calais was on the point of leaving the Paris railway station, when a traveller in hot haste, followed by a railway porter, rushed along the platform and demanded a seat. The officials declared he was too late—that the train was in motion—but the traveller persisted, slipped a bribe into the hand of the guard, who quickly unlocked the door of a first-class carriage, told him to jump in, and thrust his rugs, wrappers, hat-box and other hand luggage in after him. His sudden entry greatly disturbed a party of five other passengers who had settled down for the journey, believing they had secured a compartment to themselves. Small packages innumerable had to be moved: umbrellas, writing-cases, shawls and cloaks of every description to be stowed away where room could be made for them.

The cause of all the unexpected confusion looked round complacently while the seat to which he was legally entitled was being cleared. He growled rather than spoke a few words of apology in French and turned a deaf ear to the grumblings of one of the invaded party, a middle-aged man, who did not hesitate to express in very plain English his annoyance at the intrusion. In a few minutes the carriage was once more put in order: the shawls and cloaks were disposed of, the intruder took possession of his place, and the disturbance he had caused subsided into a dead silence as far as conversation was concerned.

It was a desperately cold night, one of the coldest in the month of January, 18—. The window panes were covered with thick coatings of hoar frost. The wind beat and blustered against the train as it sped along, beating and blustering as though in fury at the pace. Thick icicles hung from the moustache and beard of an apparition that showed itself at the carriage door like some demon of the night. The ticket collector let down the glazed sash, admitting a piercing current of cold air, and giving a view of the dreary darkness of the night without, examined the tickets, tore part away, closed the window again, and vanished as mysteriously as he had come, the train whirling and dashing onwards in defiance of the wind, threatening him with instant destruction if he missed his footing or came in contact with a railway arch while pursuing his perilous vocation.

Inside the carriage it was comfortable enough; the temperature was agreeably warm, the lamp burnt brightly, the colours of the railway rugs, shawls and wrappers, scattered about were brilliant and gay, and gave effect to the small interior.

The party whose seclusion had been so unceremoniously broken in upon consisted of five English people. They were returning home from what had been the wedding tour of two of them, the middle-aged man who so strongly objected to the admission of the stranger being the bridegroom. Mr. Jenner had married a second time. His family by his first wife, a son and daughter, together with the companion of the latter, had met the newly-wedded couple in Paris, where they had passed the few last weeks going through the course of gaiety and sight-seeing usual in the French capital. The daughter and her stepmother were about the same age, both good looking, but of different types of beauty. Light blue eyes, a clear skin, auburn hair, and regular features were the chief attractions of the former; while the latter was a brunette with large expressive eyes, heavy brows, sallow complexion, and thin lips, indicative of the resolute character of their owner. The companion was a prim, elderly lady, formerly a governess, who now having nothing more to teach her pupil than how to conduct herself in society was retained in the family for that anomalous purpose. The son seemed to be travelling with his relatives under protest, and both in appearance and bearing to be very much out of his element in their company. The father of the family and newly-married man was subdued in manner and treated all those with him, his wife included, with patriarchal condescension. His voice was sonorous, and he spoke slowly, measuring his sentences as though they were so many edicts emanating from an indisputable authority.

As the night wore away and the train rushed on towards its destination no attempt was made by the stranger to cultivate the acquaintance of his fellow passengers. He was a tall, well-made man—one whose nationality it was difficult to determine; from his tawny complexion and long moustache and beard he would have passed for a native of any continental country—a special manner about him caused him to be taken for an Englishman. The keeper of the bookstall on the Amiens station offered him the *Times*. He bought the journal and returning to the carriage studied its contents until forced to desist from the lamp, which had shown symptoms of weakness, becoming obscure, and reading being thereby rendered quite impossible.

Left in a drowsy uncomfortable twilight, the reader and all the other passengers were overcome by sleep, from which they were aroused by the hoarse voice of the guard informing them that they were at Calais and must alight—a dreary announcement at three o'clock on a winter morning, snow falling, a north-east wind blowing fiercely, and two hours on the water to look forward to! The travellers were conducted to an omnibus which was to take them to the steamer moored at the pier-head some distance from the railway station. The vehicle was quickly filled, there being a large number of passengers notwithstanding the inclement season. Those whom we have followed hitherto were the first to take their places. It was a long rumbling drive along the pier; the horses and driver seemed working in their sleep. The jolting of the omnibus made the oil-lamp flare and dazzle the half-open eyes of the weary passengers. At length the jolting and rumbling ceased; the conveyance stopped. The door was opened by the driver by means of a string; the travellers alighted. There was no conductor, no one to answer any questions and direct them where to go except the driver, and he, high up on his box, was almost invisible in the snowstorm. The sentinels in charge of the pier walked to and fro to avoid being frozen to death rather than from motives of vigilance. They were addressed by Mr. Jenner, the first passenger to leave the omnibus, but gave no other reply than to point towards the funnel of the steamer. How to get on board was indeed a difficulty. The tide being low it was necessary to descend from the place where the omnibus had stopped to the foot of the pier in order to embark. After wandering about a few minutes the passengers found their way down a flight of steps, at the bottom of which the lanterns on board the boat became visible. The leader of the stragglers hastened on, the rest walked more cautiously.

Suddenly a scream was heard—then a heavy splash. The women of the party rushed forward; a strong arm seized the foremost and prevented them following the unfortunate passenger, who had mistaken his way and fallen into the water. "Oh save him—save him!" cried the wife and daughter of the drowning man.

Their screams brought the crew of the steamer on deck, ropes were cast out, life belts thrown overboard. Lanterns were directed upon the water where the man had gone down. Presently he rose, and struggled desperately with the waves. His heavy clothing becoming saturated dragged him down. He fought hard for life, but those who witnessed his struggles in the agony of despair gave him up for lost.

"Calm yourselves, ladies—he is not gone yet," said a traveller, addressing the frantic women.

The speaker had thrown off his coats and waistcoat and was looking where to dive. He called to the sailors to fling him a hand-line, and jumped into the water near the place where the man had sunk for the second time. Into the angry waves on that dark cold winter's night to save a fellow-creature's life! All who witnessed the act of heroism held their breath, believing both men would be sacrificed. A few seconds elapsed—they were hours at that critical time—and the traveller rose from his plunge to the surface of the water, holding the exhausted body of the other by the arm. He sustained it skilfully afloat while he fixed the hand-line round the waist. A rope ladder had been flung over the side of the steamer and two sailors were standing on it ready to render assistance. The line was pulled taut by those on board, and by the exertions of the courrageous swimmer the body was brought within reach of the men on the ladder, who took it in their brawny arms and lifted it carefully on deck. Having so far accomplished his object, the traveller climbed the ladder and proceeded to give directions as to the means of resuscitation to be adopted. From among the passengers, all of whom had now come on board and were crowding round, a surgeon stepped forward and offered his services. The remedies used to restore life were in time successful. The sufferer was placed in the captain's cabin and soon was so far recovered as to be able to converse with those near him.

"Who rescued me?" he faintly asked of his wife and daughter, who were standing at the side of the couch.

"Quite a stranger," replied his wife; "that person who travelled with us from Paris. He is a barrister, I believe."

Their fellow-traveller at that moment presented himself at the door of the cabin to learn the progress of the convalescent.

Mutual introductions took place.

Mr. Burt, the hero, was made to give his name and address to Mr. Jenner's family, whose protestations of gratitude he modestly declared were embarrassing to him.

"You owe me nothing, sir," he said in reply to Mr. Jenner's repeated expressions of thankfulness. "I did no more than every man should have done who knows what he's about in the water."

"Mr. Burt, let me thank you, if words can do so, for your noble act," said the wife, coming up to him and taking his hand.

"And me," followed the daughter; "we should have lost my father had it not been for your bravery."

The vessel was making Dover harbour. It was a gloomy, cheerless, winter morning, cold and foggy. Sounds on shore were heard more and more distinctly—ropes were uncoiled, sailors hurried to and fro. The steamer entering the harbour quivered from stem to stern, then moved quietly in smooth water, and was in a few minutes moored alongside the quay. Following the advice of the medical man who had attended him on the boat, Mr. Jenner remained in Dover, at the Lord Warden Hotel. The injuries he had sustained were more serious than at first supposed. Rooms were engaged on the ground floor of the hotel, and his daughter Effie and his young wife Nelly nursed him with all loving care and tenderness. On the third day after the accident worse symtons showed themselves: he spoke incoherently, and was, according to the doctor, who had been called in, very dangerously ill. But little hope was given of his recovery.

On the evening of the fifth day the doctor told the family he could not survive many hours. Effie sat at his bedside silently watching every breath he drew. She put her arm round his neck and tried to raise his head. She smoothed his forehead and spoke softly to him. He knew her voice and smiled; he made an effort to speak, but could not. His wife came to him and he recognized her. Presently his breathing became heavier. Effie withdrew her arm, placing his head quietly upon the pillow. The under jaw fell, the hard breathing gradually ceased, until after one long deep-drawn sigh all was silent, and the two women knew that their watching was in vain.

They were inconsolable and utterly helpless in the first moments of their affliction. Upon Miss Collings, the companion, devolved the whole management of the terrible position in which they were so unexpectedly placed. The loss of his father seemingly deprived William Jenner of any power of action; he obeyed the commands of Miss Collings mechanically and quite independently of any will of his own. Exercising her old authority upon Effie, the governess undoubtedly in a measure counteracted the crushing effect that such bitter sorrow had upon the mind of her pupil. William Jenner was sent to town to consult with the family solicitor as to the funeral and other matters in which his advice was necessary.

The morning after the death, just before daylight, Effie stole downstairs from her own apartment and tried the door of her father's room. She went into the sitting-room adjoining, and there found a strange woman asleep on a mattrass upon the floor.

At the noise made, the sleeper awoke and apologized for having been taken by surprise. "It's all quite comfortable, ma'am. I have only this moment left it." In the twilight, the watcher took Effie for Miss Collings, from whom she had received her instructions the night before.

"Would you like to see it?" she continued, handing a key.

Effie did not speak, but took the key and opened the door of communication. She found the chamber scrupulously neat, every sign of confusion had disappeared. She noticed that all the linen about the room except that on the bed had been removed, the towels and table-covers were gone and the furniture left bare. The bed was covered over with a sheet. Had they taken him away without her knowledge? She looked again, and fancied beneath the sheet, in the centre of the bed, she could trace the outlines of a form.

Tremblingly she went nearer, but dared not touch the bed to convince herself. She stood for a time at the foot, supporting herself by a chair. She closed her eyes and tried to summon courage to ascertain the truth. Was he there, and was she afraid to look at him? She moved nearer and hesitated as her heart stood still within her. Nearer and nearer, still more fearingly. At last she reached the sheet and drew it down. A wild cry brought the strange woman hurriedly into the room. Effie had swooned, and was lying on the floor—her fair face as livid as that which she had just gazed at.

"Dear me," said the watcher, "this is one of the young ladies who were not to come in." She lifted Effie in her arms like a child, and taking her out of the room, placed her on the mattrass, returning, before she attempted to use any restoratives, to lock the door.

Mr. Jenner's funeral took place in London from his late residence, and care was taken by those to whom the ceremony was intrusted that it should in every way be worthy of a wealthy man deceased. His last will and testament was read by the family solicitor on the day of the interment in presence of all interested in the estate, except Effie and Mrs. Jenner, to whom the lawyer explained their respective portions individually. For this purpose, after the reading, he repaired to the drawing-room, where, in as short a manner as it was possible for his legal mind to treat such a subject, he told the ladies their fortunes.

The larger portion of the property, about £50,000, was left to the widow, in consideration of the love and affection she had shown for the testator. A long clause set forth Mr. Jenner's strong objection to her marrying again, and made the forfeiture of the legacy the penalty of her not remaining faithful to his memory. It was his wish that she should be Effie's guardian and companion, but their remaining together was not enforced by any stipulation. Subject to the condition named she had absolute control over the inheritance during life, but at her demise it became part of the residue and as such reverted to Effie and William Jenner, the residuary legatees. To these latter, property equivalent to £25,000 was left in equal proportions. The effect of the information given by the lawyer was different on each of the ladies. Mrs. Jenner's spirits perceptibly revived at the news which concerned her. She had known the suffering of poor gentility and had married for money only. She was now a rich widow with ample provision for the rest of her life. She could indulge her sorrow at leisure and in luxury. There is no greater consolation in worldly trouble than perfect security from want—a consolation which Mrs. Jenner then experienced without being quite sensible of its influence. Effie heard her portion mentioned with indifference. Miss Collings, who was also present at the interview, became more and more attentive as the explanation proceeded. She grew pale, bit her lips when Mrs. Jenner's share was made known, but on hearing the words referring to the widowhood her countenance changed and she seemed more satisfied. Her own name was coupled with a legacy of £1,000, on learning which she bowed stiffly to the family solicitor, and said she hardly expected such a mark of Mr. Jenner's esteem, although inwardly she may have been disappointed at the paltry amount.

Events in the lives of Effie and Mrs. Jenner are related in the following story, which commences some eighteen months after their bereavement.

PART I.

Mrs. Jenner, Miss Jenner and their companion, Miss Collings, occupied a house in Eaton Place, and hitherto had observed strict seclusion from gaiety, declining all the invitations which had poured in upon them from a large circle of acquaintance. The retirement was in accordance with the wish of Effie, it wearied Mrs. Jenner. The latter had busied herself in setting the house in order. Possessing very good taste and correct ideas as to the comforts necessary in a dwelling-place, she had made the family residence luxurious in every way. Each room was newly furnished and her own boudoir converted into the most *recherché* apartment the upholsterer's art could contrive. She called it her nest, and within its walls claimed sanctuary from the other inmates of the house. It was hung with yellow satin *piqué* as it is termed; the daintiest mirrors reflected the golden colours of the hangings; the tables, chairs and couches were of the most eccentric shapes and diminutive sizes; upon a carpet of the softest velvet trailed costly lace curtains which concealed the doors, one of which led into the adjacent drawing-rooms, the other on to the first floor landing.

Effie had appropriated to her own use her father's study, where she passed her time reading the books he used to read and pondering over the papers he had left. Miss Collings, who undertook the duties of housekeeper, inhabited a sitting-room furnished according to her own directions as plainly and as scantily as Mrs. Jenner's nest was luxuriously and extravagantly.

The three inmates of the house seldom saw each other except at meal times and occasionally during the conventional afternoon's drive. Not that any ill-feeling separated them, but it was tacitly understood that each should be undisturbed in her daily occupations.

An invitation had been received from a Mrs. Thornton for Mrs. Jenner and Effie to remain at her house near Windsor during the Ascot race week.

"I see no reason why we should not go," said Mrs. Jenner to Miss Collings, while discussing the subject.

"You are still in mourning," remarked the companion.

"And so I shall be for some time to come, but Effiie is not," replied the widow, who dressed in black because it was becoming to her, "and she must really be made to forget her sorrow."

"Ascot races are not quite the best opportunity on which to make your first appearance in public," observed Miss Collings austerely.

"Who will know us?" exclaimed Mrs. Jenner, pettishly; "at any rate," she continued, "I have written Mrs. Thornton to come and talk the matter over with us."

Miss Collings vouchsafed no reply, but quitted the room, leaving Mrs. Jenner alone in her boudoir.

(To be continued.)

THE JESTER.

THE SEAT OF CIVILIZATION.—A chair.

CASH ADVANCES.—Courting a rich widow.

THE Great Midland "Liberal Party:"—Josiah Mason, Esq.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.—A fortnight in a country-house in September.

WHY is a specimen of good handwriting like a dead pig? Because it is done with the pen.

A BOY having complained to his father that Bill had thrown the Bible at him and hurt him on the head, the father replied:

"Well, you are the only member of the family on whom the Bible ever made the least impression."

A droll answer is said to have been given lately in an examination at Cambridge. The candidate, being asked who Wycliffe was, and having doubtless heard him called the morning-star of the Reformation, and that he died Vicar of Lutterworth, answered that the great Reformer "was for some time editor of the *Morning Star*, and died Vicar of Wakefield.

THREE little boys were disputing as to whose father said the shortest grace.

First Boy—"My father says, 'Lord, we thank thee for these provisions.'"

Second Boy—"And mine says, 'Father, bless this food to us.'"

Third Boy—"Ah, but mine's the best of all; he shoves his plate towards mamma, and says, 'Now, Missis, fill up.'"

GOVERNOR SENTER, one of the candidates for the office of Governor of Tennessee, closed a recent speech as follows:—

"Ladies, a word before we part. When, then the day for the election arrives, get np early, prepare a good breakfast, have the shaving-water and towel ready, let nothing but smiles and cheerfulness possess you, and when the good old man starts for the poll, go with him to the gate, put your arms about his neck, kiss him, and tell him to vote for Senter."

A FAT old gentleman, who had been bitten in the calf of his leg by a dog, came to Jonah in a towering passion, declaring that it was Jonah's dog that had bitten him. Expecting an action for damages, the wag drew up the following articles as the ground for his defence:

1. By testimony in favour of the general good conduct of my dog, I can prove that nothing could make him so forgetful of his dignity as to bite a calf.
2. He is blind, and cannot see to bite.
3. Even if he could see to bite, it would be utterly impossible for him to go out of the way to do so, on account of his severe lameness.
4. Granting his eyes and legs to be good, he has no teeth.
5. My dog died six weeks since.
6. I never had a dog.

AN "ILE" STORY.—An American "ile" aristocrat relates the following example of country 'cuteness "down our way" as he termed it: "The ile fever was at its height, and lots o' smart people was pokin' about for ile, 'specially two Yankee cusses as was always a-hangin' about my friend's location. Wal, sir, on a sudden they makes the grand discovery, and that by accidentally tasting a pool o' water. 'Ile, ile!' cries they, and down they goes on their knees to sniff and taste. They could'n give over tasting, it was so nasty. After this they makes tracks to my friend's place, and 'Have you any objecshun to sell this farm?' ses they. 'Nary a one,' ses he, 'if you'll give me my price for it.' Which in course they did—five times the vally. 'Now,' ses my friend, when they'd made it all square in writing, 'may I ax why you've paid such a price for this old farm, &c.?' 'Ile,' ses they; you poor old crittur, we've found ile.' 'Where?' ses he. 'In the water-pool t' other side of the marsh. 'Guess ye have,' says he, a grinnin' like a 'possum, 'for my lad broke the stable-lamp over it this mornin' The way them two Yankees slunked out was a caution."

A meeting of shareholders in the Albert Life Assurance Company was held on Saturday. Mr. Price, liquidator, read a report on the state of the affairs, and produced a balance-sheet. Among the principal items on the debtor side are liabilities on policies £1,297,000, and on the creditor side, uncalled capital, £321,000, estimated to produce £150,000, and the deficiences £971,000. Explanations of sums paid to Mr. Sheridan, M.P., Mr. Cave, M.P., and Mr. Gunsworthy, and many others as compensation, were given. The list was very long. They had had from £150 to £15,000 shareholders. This showed where the money had gone, and there had been a policy of concealment throughout. In reply to a shareholder the chairman said that the shares were liable to be called up. A resolution that Mr. Kirby should resign was not pressed. The chairman pledged himself to call another meeting of the shareholders next Tuesday fortnight.

BIRMINGHAM AND MIDLAND TRADE.

The quietude which for a considerable period has characterised certain branches of our local industry appears to be gradually disappearing, and in various quarters we notice indications of returning animation. The demand on account of the home trade, which, in the early part of the year, was anything but satisfactory, has of late been pretty well sustained, and the factors' representatives—whose advices during the past summer were of a dispiriting character—now send home well-filled order sheets, and tolerably favourable reports. In nearly all the leading branches of the town trade, many skilled operatives have, throughout the past quarter, been fairly employed; but that dulness has prevailed, and is still the distinguishing mark of some of the minor departments of manufacture, is, unhappily, beyond all doubt. Future prospects, however, are perhaps more cheering than they have been for a long time. The reports from the agricultural districts upon the wheat crops are, upon the whole, favourable; and this, coupled with the magnificent weather for garnering the grain, will, of course, give an additional impetus to many branches of English industry. With the London houses there is not much doing just now, nor has there been for some months past. It is hoped, however, that, with the close of harvest operations, and the approach of another season, some reaction will take place, and that transactions with Metropolitan firms will—as in days gone bye—import activity to the trade of the Midlands generally.

Enquiries for certain of the chief foreign markets have lately become more numerous. With South America there is rather more doing, and the shipments to Australia have for some months past been tolerably satisfactory. With North America, transactions are upon a more extensive scale than they were during the past quarter; but there is still plenty of room for further improvement. The Continental trade is tolerably steady; the Egyptian trade is improving; and the demand on account of the numerous markets in our East Indian possessions has been well sustained. As regards the West Indies, Cuba, and New Zealand, there is not much doing. Referring to the existing condition of particular departments of our local trade, we may state that the edge-tool business is, for the season, rather active; that many of the tinplate workers have a goodly number of orders upon their books; that some of the leading lamp and chandelier establishments begin to show signs of increased vitality; and that the hollow-ware moulders, and several of the japanners and steel toy manufacturers, are pretty well engaged. The gun trade is still sadly depressed, and in the jewellery business—and, indeed, throughout the fancy departments generally—quietude and languor are manifest. At the principal electro-plating establishment the skilled artisans have steady employment, and although the brassfounders and steel-pen manufacturers, as a rule, do not report favourably, indications of slight improvement are not wanting.

The latest reports relative to the state of the Metal Market are rather unfavourable. Transactions among consumers have of late been upon a somewhat limited scale; but it is hoped that a reaction will shortly take place, in consequence of the comparative lightness of the stocks of articles into which the raw material so largely enters. That a fair demand for various kinds of hardware goods will ere long spring up cannot be doubted. For a considerable period buyers have exercised great caution in ordering articles for the home market; and as the demand among consumers has been fairly sustained, it is more than likely that with the approach of another quarter the Metal Market will be in a far more active state than it is at the present moment.

In the surrounding Midland district, trade, though not by any means in a healthy or buoyant condition, is, nevertheless, a little better than it was in the early part of the year. At some of the principal iron works of Staffordshire the machinery is kept in almost full operation, and several of the leading firms engaged in this important branch of industry have contracts on hand that will keep them tolerably busy for some time to come. From this, however, it must not be inferred that the iron trade of South Staffordshire and East Worcestershire is in a brisk or healthy state. Unhappily it is not, although there are indications of increasing vitality in many quarters. At Wolverhampton the staple branches are marked by some additional activity. The tube manufacturers, for instance, do not complain; and certain of the lock makers report more favourably. Among the japanners and others there is perhaps, on the whole, quite as much doing as there usually is at this period of the year. The lock trade of Willenhall is still in a languid state. At the great tube works of Wednesbury the hands are pretty well employed; the saddlers' ironmongers of Walsall are anything but busy; and in the hollow-ware trade of West Bromwich, although many of the operatives are kept on full time, there are not a few instances of dulness and depression.

Throughout the needle district the staple branch is tolerably active. At all the old-established concerns the operatives are working full time, and the majority of the leading manufacturers have a fair sprinkling of orders still before them. In the fish-hook business there is perhaps about as much doing as could reasonably be expected at this season. The sewing machine needle trade, so long marked by animation, is still in a flourishing and prosperous state, and at the principal establishment (that of Messrs. G. Townsend & Co., of whose extensive manufactory we give illustrations in other parts of our Journal) the numerous operatives are, as usual, fully employed, and all the machinery is in active operation throughout the week.

The reports recently to hand from Sheffield are, taken altogether, rather favourable than otherwise. The demand for Bessemer steel is still well sustained, and the hands are on full time, and likely to be so for a considerable period, in consequence of the continued demand for rails, &c., for Russia and other continental markets. There is also a good deal doing with steel rails for India and other foreign quarters. At the armour-plate mills the machinery is in gear continually; but the steel-gun and shot manufacturers do not report as favourably as they did a short time ago. The file trade lacks animation; the edge-tool business is languid; and several branches of the cutlery trade are decidedly dull

The great majority of the industrial classes of Nottingham are steadily engaged. For some months past particular departments of the lace trade have exhibited indications of improvement, and the demand which set in during the spring months has been fairly maintained up to the present time. With Valenciennes, Guipure laces, and quiltings, there is a tolerably steady business doing, with every probability of the briskness now prevailing being sustained. In the other branches of trade considerable activity continues to present itself; and notwithstanding the fact that some of the hands are not making full time, many branches are in a comparatively buoyant state.

The principal businesses of Leicester are not without animation. The quietude that existed in certain branches in the spring months has almost disappeared, and the bulk of the industrial classes have, as regards employment, but little to complain of. The demand for the home markets has lately given fresh impetus to certain of the leading branches; and future prospects are pronounced more favourable than they were in the corresponding period of last year.

At Manchester the cotton trade is more active than it was during the past month. As yet, however, the reports do not speak very favourably of this great branch of industry. In various quarters the mills are not running full time, and a great proportion of the industrial population are not working more than four or five days a week.

At Middlesborough, and throughout the Cleveland district, the iron trade is rather brisk. With pig iron there is a steady business doing, and the shipments to various continental and other ports are considerable. The rail trade is distinguished by much animation, and for bars there is a steady demand.

How they Treat Violinists in the East.—If you would entertain an Eastern Prince *à la mode* you must give him a concert, no matter whether he be an enthusiastic of the divine art, or has a horror of music. *La Perseveranza* gives the following account of the gracious reception by the Sultan of the "celebrated" violinist, Wieniawski. On getting into the palace of Dolma Bakche he was ushered into a small room where there were only a piano and a music stool. This room was between two great saloons, one crowded with the attendants, and in the other was the Sultan, so placed in a corner that he could not be seen by the player, and at the door was a chamberlain to give orders for the proceedings. Wieniawski, accompanied by the Court *maestro*, Guatelli, began his performance, and it was a horribly cold day, and of course there was no fireplace or fire. As soon as he had finished his first piece the chamberlain without a minute's delay set him going again, and kept him at it in this way till he had got through twenty-two pieces at a stretch. The twenty-third, a mazurka, was stopped half way through summarily and the musician received two hundred pounds in gold pieces before leaving. Some of the details of this statement are denied by local authorities, but it is pretty near the mark. No wonder the Sultan prefers the Christy Minstrels and Bones, or a band of jugglers,

OURSELVES.

To the Editor of the Illustrated Midland News.

Dear Sir,—Will you permit an old inhabitant of Birmingham to express his great satisfaction with your new and courageous scheme? So far as my experience goes, it seems to me there never was a more marked instance of an interpretation of the unexpressed but none the less apparent desire of a people. The growth of art as applied to manufactures in Birmingham has been exceedingly rapid within the last few years. It is almost within my memory that a bit of egg moulding was considered quite adornment enough for any useful article; beauty of design, gracefulness of outline, an attempt at correct taste, were rarely or ever thought of. But in the present day all this is changed, and the art element has entered so largely into our manufactures that usefulness and beauty must go together. The French have no longer a monopoly of elegance and grace in small things which we used to concede them whilst we took credit for massiveness and grandeur.

There was a time, Sir, when my neighbours in Birmingham thought the elegancies of the foreigner trifling—contemptible. They have learnt better now, and in some things have outstripped him; but we have all much to learn, although I must be allowed this boast, Sir, that the town of Birmingham, for variety of manufactures, rapidity of execution, receptive intelligence in all that appertains to industrial art, and for the enterprise of its people, stands pre-eminent, unequalled in the history of manufactures, unrivalled throughout the world, There is one feature in your plan of the Illustrated Paper which must especially commend itself to the Midland Counties, and will show to Christendom what England can do and is doing. I allude to your intention of illustrating local works. The resources of this District are almost unknown to the general public, and we want a more direct and efficient mode of communicating the nature and character of those resources not only to customers at home but to the Foreign and Colonial Dealer.

You, Sir, if you carry out your promises, will be this important medium. You, Sir, will be the journalistic historian of the Manufactures of the Midlands, more powerful with your pencil than with your pen, since it will be through your illustrations that you will tell that wonderful story of industrial power which is the story of "these famous Midland Counties."

I am sure your enterprise will be supported liberally by the manufacturing Princes of Birmingham and the Midlands. We all know the enormous cost of first-class wood engraving, and your commingling of general with the special pictorial work will find a ready response of interest on the part of newspaper readers. Your scheme is one of the best and most plucky things in journalism, and, as a true and faithful mirror of the aspirations of a great producing District, it must assuredly be successful.

I am, dear Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
A Manufacturer.

[The above is one amongst many kindly letters of encouragement which we have received during the last few weeks. We print it, more for the purpose of saying a few words concerning our shortcomings, than to glorify ourselves in "A Manufacturer's" enthusiastic and generous welcome. This first number of The Illustrated Midland News is by no means satisfactory to us, though it may fairly be taken as an indication of what we propose to do. As time goes on we shall improve the work both in appearance and in matter. The public may judge us, nevertheless, by our tribute to the splendid benevolence of Josiah Mason; the Manufacturer, in his individual capacity, will gather our special intentions towards him from the drawings of the Hunt End Needle Manufactory, and the "Removal of Trees." Examples of our "Exhibition of New Designs" will appear in future numbers, Next week we shall publish a series of beautifully-executed views of the Oldbury Carriage Works, and we hope to follow these examples of Midland Counties enterprise with others equally interesting. All we ask is that, in these early days of our existence, the public will take into their judgment of us an account of the special difficulties which beset the establishment of an Illustrated Newspaper. We feel that we have already said too much about ourselves, our hopes, and our intentions. We ask the indulgence usually accorded to a first appearance, and promise our readers that they shall be troubled with no further intrusion of Editorial explanations for some time to come. —Ed. I. M. N.]

The Birmingham Wire Guage.—Mr. Latimer Clark, in a paper read before the British Association at their recent meeting at Exeter, says:—The adoption of some uniform wire guage has become a necessity of manufacture, and I submit that the B. W. G. re-established on a rational basis and rectified from the irregularities which have crept into it, partly by want of some recognised standard and partly by reason of the impurities of the materials from the properties of which it was originally determined, is the best adapted to the wants of the wire guage. In conclusion, I must call the attention of the British Association to the labour of M. Karmarsch, M. Thomée, and M. Peters, towards the establishment of a uniform wire guage in Germany, whose opinions entirely agree with my own as to the superiority of the English B. W. G. over all the others now in use, and to whose writings I am indebted for much interesting matter and instructive information on this subject.

A Kind physician, living near Nottingham, wishing to smooth the last hours of a poor woman whom he was attending, asked her if there was anything he could do for her before she died. The poor soul, looking up, replied: "Doctor, I have always thought that I should like to possess a glass butter-dish before I died."

ON CHANGE.

There was a fair attendance of gentlemen interested in the iron trade at the Exchange on Thursday last, and the tone of the meeting was perhaps, just a shade more favourable. Stocks of pig-iron have not increased lately, and the demand, such as it is, is tolerably steady. Orders for rails have for some time imparted activity to several of the principal works. With home consumers there is a little more doing. The weather, which a short time ago was altogether unfavourable for operations at the puddling furnaces, having moderated the hands are now pretty well engaged, and although it is thought that some further improvement will take place early in the ensuing quarter, there is no chance of better prices at present.

MARKETS.

CATTLE.—Birmingham Smithfield, Tuesday.—There was a smaller number of beasts on offer this day. The trade very slack, at a slight decrease from last Tuesday's Prices. In a few instances choice animals realised 7½d. per lb. The supply of sheep and lambs was large. Trade inactive. Choice sheep in a few instances realised ¼d. per lb. increase in price from Tuesday last. Fat pigs a very short supply. Beef, 6d. to 7¼d. per lb.; mutton, 6d. to 7½d. per lb.; lamb, 6d. to 7½d. per lb.; bacon pigs, 11s. to 12s. per score; porket ditto, 11s. to 12s. 3d. per score.—Wolverhampton, Wednesday.—There was a large supply of stock to-day, especially half-meated beasts, with a full market of sheep and lambs. Beef, 5½d. to 7¼d.; wether mutton, 7½d. to 7¾d.; ewe mutton, 6½d. to 7¼d.; lambs, 6½d. to 7½d.; veal 6d. to 7½d.; porket pigs, 11s. 6d. to 12s. 3d.; bacon, 11s. to 12s. 2d.

CORN.—Walsall, Tuesday.—A fair attendance, and business very flat. The farmers would not submit to a reduction by the millers, hence few sales were effected.—Wolverhampton, Wednesday: A better attendance than of late. Wheat sold at an advance on last week's price. Barley, Oats, Peas, and Beans bring full rates. Mark-lane, Monday.—Fair supplies of new English wheat were on sale in the provincial markets held on Saturday. The trade was very dull, and in all cases reduced rates were accepted. In most instances prices receded 3s. to 4s. per qr. Spring corn was cautiously dealt in, about previous quotations. A moderate supply of new English wheat was on sale, and some samples came to hand of better quality than was recently anticipated. The show of old produce was limited. Prices were 1s. to 2s. per qr lower than on Monday last. With Foreign wheat the market was fairly supplied. Sales progressed slowly, at a fall of 1s. to 2s. per quarter. Beons were firm in value. Peas met a slow sale on former terms. Business in flour was only to a moderate extent, at drooping prices. Linseed was firm, and rape seed was rather higher in value. Agricultural seeds realised full rates. Cakes were firm. Indian corn experienced a moderate inquiry, at late rates.

HOPS.—London, Monday.—The late hot weather has had a beneficial effect on the hop plantations, and a fine crop will now be obtained, where a failure was foreshadowed. Prices are almost nominal.

POTATOES.—London, Monday.—Full average supplies of potatoes were on sale. The demand was only to a moderate extent, at our quotations. English Shaws, 70s. to 80s.; Regents, 70s. to 100s.; French, 60s. to 70s. per ton.

WOOL.—London, Monday.—The colonial wool sales continne to be well attended by home and foreign buyers. English wool has been quiet, but firm.

REGISTER OF BANKRUPTS.

H. T. Bishop, Birmingham, commission agent.
J. Snow, Stratford-on-Avon, cattle dealer.
W. Brown, Newcastle-under-Lyme, wine and spirit merchant.
S. Taylor, Mansfield, coal merchant.
J. Incson and Richard Varnum Baxter, Leicester, worsted spinners.
H. Britten, Maesteg, near Bridgend, general merchant
S. Peace, Wrexham, colliery proprietor.
T. Andrews, Blockley, Warwickshire, cattle dealer.
J. Worth, Kidderminster, yarn merchant.
A. Stevens, Bristol, auctioneer.
J. D. Evans, Bridgend, Glanmorganshire, draper.
M. J. Bird, Northmolton, Devonshire, manure merchant.
W. Newton, East Ayton, Yorkshire, veterinary surgeon
G. Sedman, Falsgrave, Yorkshire, innkeeper.
W. Keeton, Eckington, Derbyshire, farmer, and E. Keeton, the same place, relieving officer.
R. Croft, Stanley, flour dealer.
J. Drury, Oldbury, labourer.
E. M. Rogers, Stourbridge, boot and shoe maker.
D. Taylor, Stroud, Gloucestershire, innkeeper.
E. Wilkes, Aston New Town, near Birmingham, jeweller.
J. Etheridge, Birmingham, journeyman machinist.
W. F. Musk, Norwich, baker
W. Allen, Norwich, florist.
J. Dolling, Bath, fly proprietor.
T. Robinson, Hanley, Staffordshire, beerseller.

PARTNERSHIPS DISSOLVED.

Tangye Brothers and Holman, Laurence Pountney Lane, machinery agents; as far as regards Edward Tangye.—Tangye Brothers, Birmingham and Smethwick, engineers; as far as regards Edward Tangye.—Jones and Manton, Birmingham, button and general factors. —T. Jenkins and R. J. Bromley, Stafford and Wantage, general drapers.—Rebecca Sawyer and G. F. Norton, Birmingham, coach harness furniture platers and manufacturers.

OBITUARY.

PURCELL.—Aug. 27th., at Scarborough, aged 22, Dr. Charles Gore Purcell, youngest son of Dr. Purcell, late Poor-law Inspector for Ireland.

BAXTER.—Aug 22nd., at Ramsey, Isle of Man, Stafford Stratton Baxter, Esq., late of Mancetter Manor, Atherstone, aged 69.

PERKINS.—Aug. 29th., in his 79th year, Mr. Matthew Perkins, of Mary Street, Balsall Heath.

THOMPSON.—Aug. 29th., in the 17th year of her age, Lucy, the beloved daughter of Charles Thompson, of Lodge Road, Winson Green.

CHINN.—Aug. 28th., aged 55 years, Mr. Richard Chinn, of this town.

PEARSON.—Aug. 26th., aged 53 years, Mary, the beloved wife of John Pearson, of Patrick House, Meriden.

JAY.—Aug. 23rd., at Horncastle, Lincolnshire, aged 67, Mr. Charles Jay, Builder.

Tinning by the Wet Process.—The following method is recommended in Germany as superior to that usually employed for tinning. Dissolve one part of salt of tin (crystallized protoclorate of tin) in ten parts of water, and add to it a solution of two parts of soda, or of caustic potash, in twenty parts of water. The solution will at first be cloudy, but it will become clear after a short time; when used for tinning it will cloud again, but without any injurious effect on the operation. In the vessel in which the tinning is effected a stage or shelf, composed of a thin sheet of tin pierced full of holes, is placed to receive the articles to be tinned; when the articles are arranged the solution is poured in and the whole heated gradually, the solution being constantly stirred with a tin rod. The effect is said to be very rapid and brilliant.

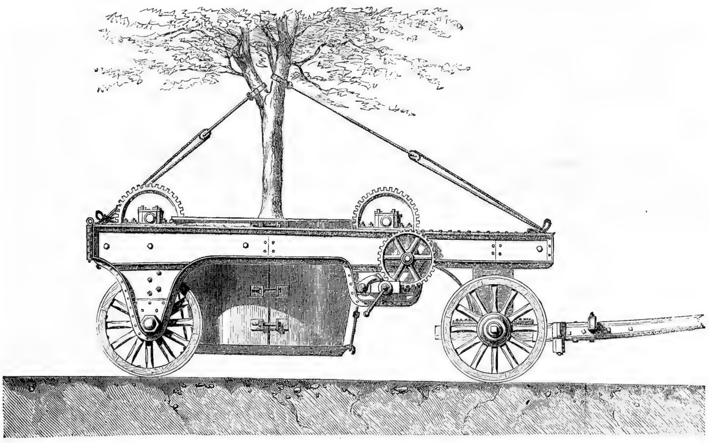
TRANSPLANTING OF TREES.

Every one who has visited Paris knows, and every one else must have heard of the fact that all the broad boulevards, quays, public walks, gardens, and squares are planted with trees, which throw a pleasant shade over the foot-paths and greatly relieve the eye from the glare of white stone walls. In most cases, of course, the trees are planted when mere saplings with stems about as large as a man's wrist, but when it was thought necessary to produce an effect at once fine horse chesnuts, and even grand cedars, with boles as large as a man's body, have been removed bodily, and in many instances with encouraging success. The Bourse, the exchange of Paris, is now surrounded by a mass of noble chestnuts which were all brought from the Bois de Boulogne.

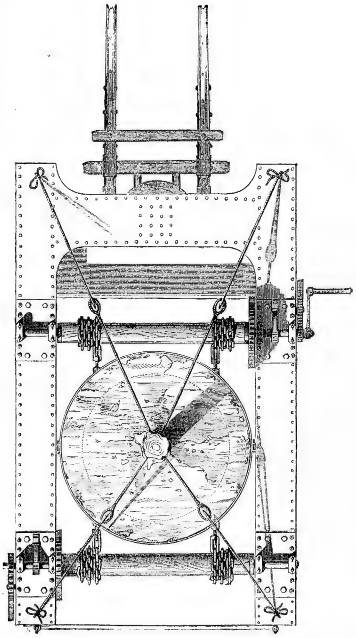
The Champ de Mars was formerly as bare as the back of your hand, but those who visited the Universal Exhibition of 1867, will remember that there were a number of trees in the park and adjoining garden, some of them of considerable size; these also were all brought from the Bois de Boulogne.

There is nothing new in the removal of trees, but we believe the late Sir Joseph Paxton was the first who dared to uproot giant vegetables, as our neighbours the French sometimes call them, and transport them to new and distant homes. He invented a special carriage for the purpose, which was provided with a purchase for raising the tree, after the roots had been dug round, conveying it to the spot where it was to be planted, and lowering it into the place carefully prepared for it.

When the authorities of Paris determined upon planting, or rather of completing the plantation of their boulevards and public places with trees, they availed themselves of Sir Joseph's invention, and they have since greatly improved upon it. When the Bois de Boulogne was being laid out in its present state some very fine trees, including a noble cedar, were removed, but the carriages then in use were insufficient for the purpose, and the process of removal was very tedious and costly. Three different carriages are now in use in Paris and elsewhere. Our engravings represent the carriage in elevation and plan. It is composed of iron and constructed in the most careful manner, and cost the large sum of £340; the two smaller carriages are of wood, and cost respectively £28 and £44.



CARRIAGE USED IN TRANSPLANTING TREES.—ELEVATION VIEW.



SECTIONAL VIEW.

M. Alphand, of the Imperial Corps of Engineers of Roads and Bridges, director of the public ways and promenades of the city of Paris, under whose direction all the parks and gardens of the city have been laid out, has become the historian of his own labours, and in a work which no corporate or other body entrusted with the sanatary and decorative arrangements of a town should be without, gives a minute account of every operation which has been carried out for the improvement and embellishment of the city, so far as regards promenades, parks, and gardens, including drainage, irrigation, planting of trees, shrubs, and flowers, and maintenance of the whole, with the cost in detail of every item.

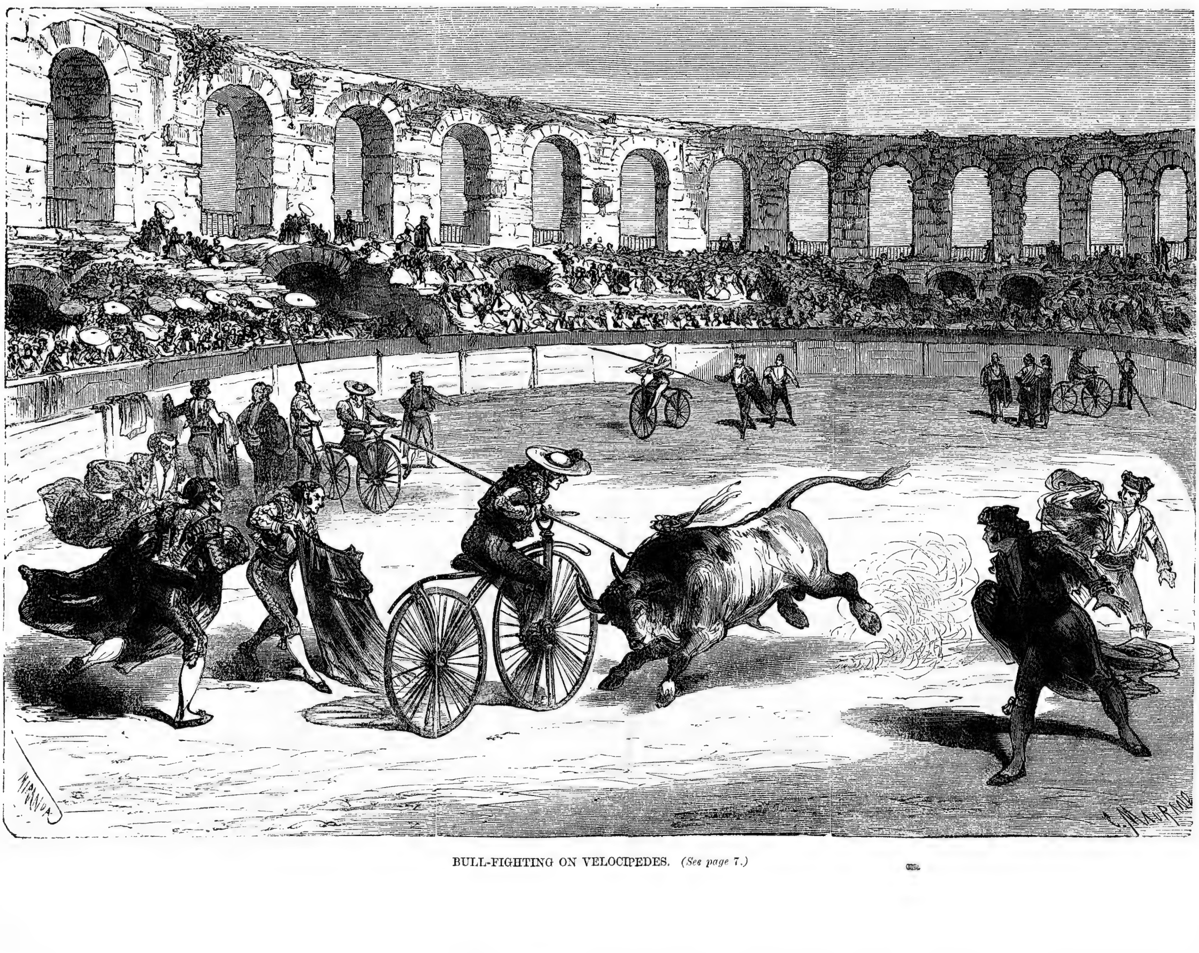
The work is sumptuously printed, and splendidly illustrated, not only with views and sections of the engineering works, but with representations of all the apparatus employed, admirable plans and sections of the ground, pictorial views of the most remarkable portions of the plantations, buildings, lodges, waterfalls, lakes, and other features, charming engravings of the various exotic trees which have been acclimatized in Paris (many of which we are glad to see are from the pencil of Mr. Freeman, an English artist resident in Paris), and by a number of large chromo-lithographic drawings of remarkable foreign plants, now cultivated in the great Paris garden at Passy for the decoration of the public parks and gardens.

From this work we extract the particulars relative to the method, expense, and success which has attended the transplanting of trees by the means already referred to.

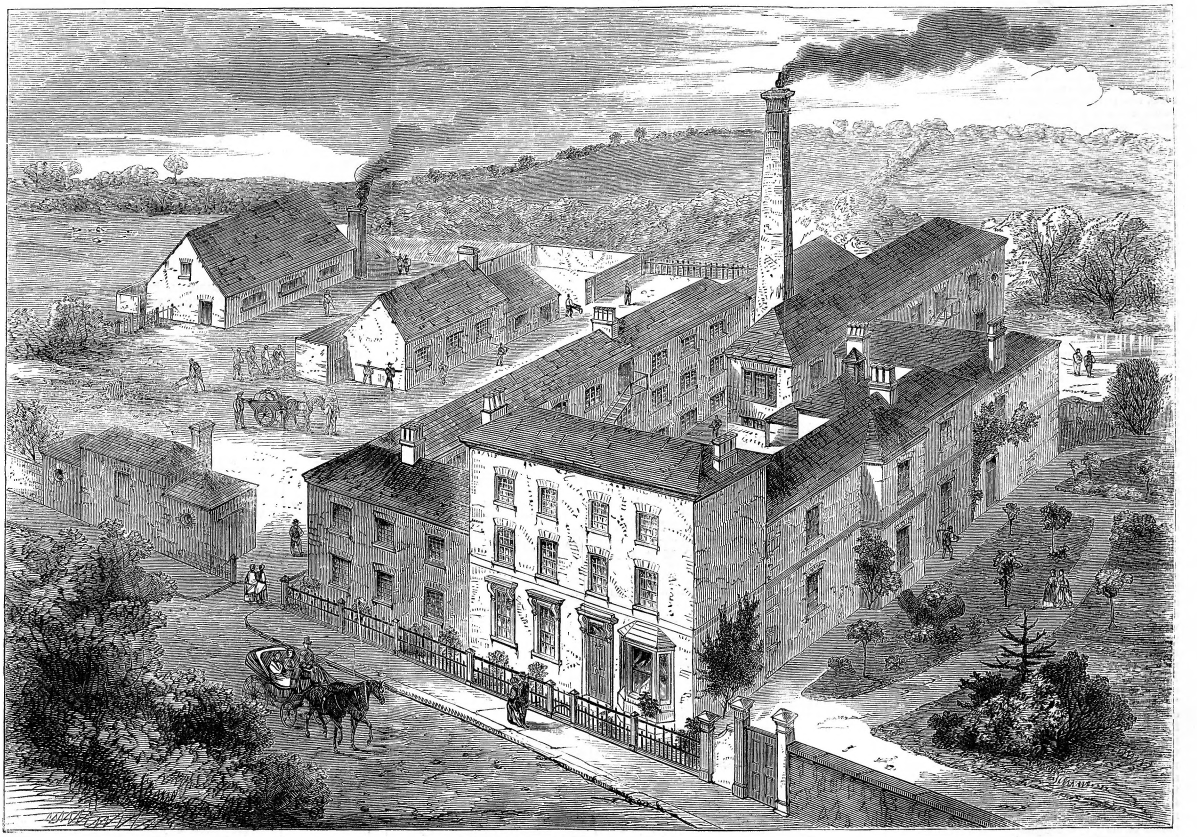
A tree from 20 to 30 feet high with a stem from 2 to 4 inches in diameter is removed by means of the smallest carriage, drawn by one horse, at an expense varying from 16s. to 32s.; one of 20 to 40 feet in height and measuring from 4 to 8 inches in diameter requires the use of the middle sized carriage, with two or three horses, and costs in removal and replanting from 32s. to 60s.; the largest sized trees, measuring from 8 to 32 inches in diameter, and from 20 to 60 feet in height, can only be transplanted with the aid of the great iron carriage, and at an expense varying from £3 to £5 each.

The size of the ball of earth taken up with the trees varies, not only with the size of the latter, but also with its nature and that of the soil into which it is to be transplanted; in the case of deciduous trees the ball varies from 32 to 100 inches in diameter, but in that of evergreens whatever their size may be, the ball is scarcely ever less than six feet in diameter, and frequently larger.

The first operation is to dig a trench all round the tree at the required distance from the trunk, and to bind around the ball and roots a quantity of branches secured, or in cases where the soil is very friable, with short planks secured by iron bands provided with tightening screws. When this is done the tree is lifted by means of the levers and winches attached to the carriage, the back rail of which is first removed to allow the frame of the carriage to take in the tree and



BULL-FIGHTING ON VELOCIPEDES. *(See page 7.)*



HUNT END NEEDLE WORKS, REDDITCH.

branches, or planks are passed beneath and fastened to the ball; cords or chains are then passed beneath the tree, which is raised clear of the ground and supported in an erect position by means of guy ropes, as shown in the engraving. The hole to receive the tree is carefully prepared with the proper kind of soil, moistened, and the operation of replanting is the converse of the former.

Of course the success of such operations is not uniform; about two thirds of the larger trees and one third of the smaller were lost when planted by contract in the sandy soil of the Bois de Boulogne. In the alluvial argilacious plains near the Seine, on the contrary, the transplantation of deciduous trees has been almost uniformly successful, while coniferous trees have almost always failed in this cold soil. Cedars and pines, on the other hand, have been found to succeed in a soil composed of sand, marl, and black clay, almost impermeable, when the land was completely drained.

The principal trees and shrubs transplanted are cedars, thuias, junipers, pines, firs, piceas, yews, taxodia, Cunnighamia, horse chestnuts, poplars, plane trees, elms, tulip trees, ailanthus, maples, and American oaks. The only kinds however which can be relied on for success are the cedar, horse chestnut, thuia, poplar plane, American oak, and ailanthus; the rest only succeed here and there. The horse chestnut may be removed at almost all seasons, even when the sap is rising, but the operation must be performed with as much speed as possible, to prevent the roots suffering from exposure to the air. Transplantation of large trees is however always a delicate operation, requiring the supervision of an experienced horticulturist, and careful workmen. Nearly every large tree planted by contract in the Bois de Boulogne has died, although the contractors guaranteed their success.

Even when the transplanted tree lives it requires considerable care. The weakening of the tree by the removal of a portion of the roots, in spite of constant watering, often causes the whole of the leaves to fall off. To prevent this the boles of large trees are surrounded with sheets of moss covered with canvas and bound round with cord, and at the top of this swarthing a tin funnel is introduced, by which water is poured between the moss and the bark of the tree. The roots are also liable to canker, either from injuries received in the transplanting, or from an excess of moisture, in which case all the cankered portions have to be cut off and the ends dressed with a cement called *mastic vegetale*, and, where the soil is too damp, gravel has to be introduced to open the soil.

The cost of the new plantations in the Bois de Boulogne alone has been £25,396, and the number of trees and shrubs employed no less than 420,080; of these 1,550 were removed with the surrounding mould with the aid of the carriages.

Each of the boulevards has now its own special kind of tree of which the plane, horse chestnut, and ailanthus are the most frequent.

Before closing these remarks, it is well to say a few words about irrigation and road watering. The greatest enemies the landscape gardener and road keeper have to contend with in France are drought and dust, and M. Alphand and his coadjutors have naturally paid great attention to the above subjects. The water cart has been superseded by a system of hydrants, from which the water is distributed by means of jointed tubes, formed of thin sheet iron, and branches; this is found very much more effective and less costly than the old system. In the case of grass a modification of the system is employed, the tubes are pierced with rough holes, three in a length of about six feet, and the branch being replaced by a cork or stopper, the water squirts out in an irregular manner and falls in fine spray over a large space. The line of tubes are placed in a line along the grass, and moved from time to time till the whole of the grass is well watered. This system of watering roads has a special interest for the authorities of all towns and districts, and we may probably take an opportunity of illustrating it.

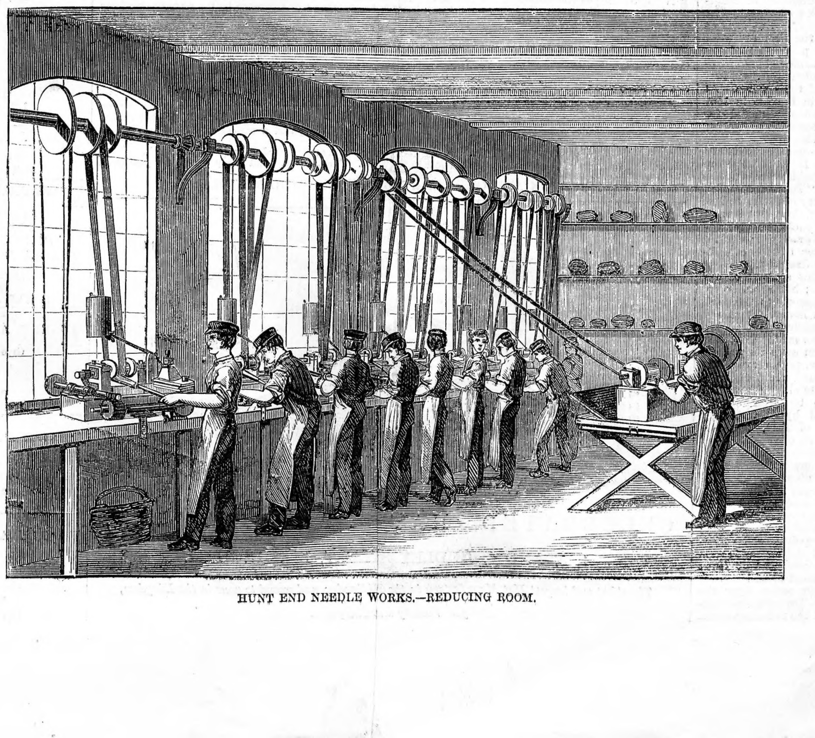
MESSRS. TOWNSEND'S NEEDLE FACTORY, HUNT END, NEAR REDDITCH.

Prolific as the great Midland district is in manufactures, few of its industries are of greater interest and importance than needle-making, which gives employment to at least 8,000 persons. The trade is a very old one—so old that no writer has been able to assign a date to its commencement. We know that needles must have been in use in pre-historic times, and that they were first made of wood, gold, bronze, bone, and other materials. According to tradition, the needle trade was established in 1650 at Long Crendon; in 1700, horse-mills for pointing and scouring needles were set up at Studley, a little village close to Redditch.

Redditch and its needles are world-famous; but the little town which has the privilege of standing in two counties (Worcestershire and Warwickshire) has a formidable rival at the neighbouring village of Hunt End, where Messrs. George Townsend & Co. set up a factory for the production of machine-needles in the year 1851. The "Givry" Works—for so Messrs. Townsend & Co. have named them after a valued friend—stand in a valley in the heart of the beautiful Worcestershire country, between two and three miles from Redditch, and are approached along a high road locally known as "the Ridgway." On either side of the ridge the view takes in an extensive tract of meadow, field, and coppice-land that in this autumn-time is wonderfully beautiful.

The fairer portion of the readers of THE ILLUSTRATED MIDLAN DNEWS will be interested in learning, perhaps for the first time, that the needles which are indispensable equally in the *boudoir* and in the still-room, in the parlour and in the kitchen, pass through something like seventy pairs of hands before they are sent out from the factory for sale. Those who pin their faith in "Wheeler and Wilson," delight in "the Singer," or think Thomas's sewing-machines "far above rubies," will also be glad to be told that the really useful part about those machines, i. e. the needle, is made at Messrs. Townsend's beautifully-situated manufactory in the little Worcestershire village of Hunt End, within two miles of that famous forest with which the name of John of Feckenham is indissolubly associated, and the vicinity of which was erewhile the scene of many a Royal chase; for is not this "Hunt End," — in other words, the place where the hunters were wont to terminate the day's sport previous to regaling themselves perhaps with a venison pasty and humming old October?

All the wire comes to Hunt



HUNT END NEEDLE WORKS.—REDUCING ROOM.

End in round coils from Sheffield. When it has been cut into the required lengths, which is done by hand, large shears being used for that purpose, the metal is rounded, and then scoured by being placed under a mangle-like machine and subjected to the action of oil and emery powder, which turns out the lengths as bright as may be. But even now the steel wire is too long for many sorts, and it is consequently sent to the reducing room, where it is, to use the technical term, "reduced" to such lengths as are requisite. This process is performed by twelve machines each worked by four boys, as shown in our engraving, and the credit of the invention is due to Mr. George Townsend, who possesses in an eminent degree all the qualities which go to make an inventor. Purely technical details of this branch and of other parts of the trade would only weary and not instruct the reader; it will be sufficient to say that the little machine for reducing answers its purpose admirably, and with a great saving of labour. After being "buffed" and stamped the needles are "eyed," which is effected by another simple arrangement—a punching machine; next they are filed, and made red hot, a piece of common brown wrapping-paper being laid at the top of every fresh set of needles. After leaving the furnace the needles are annealed; the omission of which causes many inferior articles to be sent into the market. Burnishing in the soft state is the next process; straitening in the soft the next: neither of which calls for further mention here. A most important part of the manufacture is the pointing, which is done by the workman at a grindstone turned by steam power. First the needles are brought to a fine point; next, rubbed down, re-pointed, and set; washed, dried, and sent to the dies, where they are stamped. They are next hardened, tempered, hard-straightened, and polished in the groove: terms which sufficiently explain themselves. Afterwards they undergo the processes of "siding," rounding, and being smoothed in the blade and points. That fine blue colour seen in the shank of the sewing-machine needle is obtained by subjecting the wire to a strong heat. The little lady who threads her needle in the nursery when she has a mind to be industrious and make a handsome frock for her doll, would wax very wroth, perhaps scream, and (such is frail human nature!) even go the length of kicking the nurse, innocent of all blame, were she to find the thread refuse to penetrate the "eye" of the needle. Partly to prevent such a catastrophe, therefore, and also partly to save the time of other young "persons" who toil wearily of nights in lonesome, chill garrets, stitching not for dolls' dresses, but for dear life, the needle-maker has devised a cunning plan for making smooth that part of the needle to which reference has been made. He puts the needles on a frame, after threading them upon six-cord thread, and with steam causes the frame to oscillate. Thus the needles are shaken about in a kind of St. Vitus's dance until the eye is rendered quite smooth. And this the needle-maker terms "eye-polishing." Every manufacturer makes it a rule now-a-days to use a trade mark. A few years ago unscrupulous vendors did not hesitate to sell Messrs. Townsend's needles as of their own make; and it was to prevent a recurrence of this imposition that the firm at Hunt End devised a simple and effective trade-mark, which you might scan their needles in vain to find out unless a polished ring at the top of the shank were shown you.

We have now got our needles nearly ready to send out. They have been cut into the proper lengths for the machines, reduced, grooved, burnished, polished, annealed, eye-polished, and trade-marked. They have but to be regulated at the top of the blade, rough and smooth polished, and then papered and labelled for sale. The papering is done by girls, whose quickness the visitor cannot help noticing. It is well for all of us to take a pride in our work, and you may be sure that the girls at the Hunt End factory look with admiring, if slightly envious, eyes upon that "maiden of bashful fifteen" who is aptest at needle packing.

The reader will have gathered from the above description of the needle manufacture that Messrs. Townsend and Co. confine their chief attention to machine-needles; not exclusively, however, for the intending purchaser of hand-sewing needles has only to ask to have what he requires at the Hunt End factory. But it is as machine-needle makers that the firm are most widely known. The senior proprietor of the manufactory points with justifiable pride to several medals received at the London and Paris Exhibitions for the excellence of their wares. At the International Exhibition in London in 1862 Messrs. Townsend were awarded a medal for "superior quality in sewing, machine and other needles;" at Paris, in 1867, they received "the only medal awarded for sewing-machine needles;" and last year, when at the Havre Exhibition they took the highest prize, the silver medal, the jurors' report declared that "Townsend & Co., by the superiority and ingenuity of their needles, shuttles, reels, and other accessories, have largely contributed to the popularity of the sewing-machine." This was peculiarly gratifying, coming as it did from so high a quarter, but the compliment was no greater than was deserved.

Here we might conclude this account of our visit to the Hunt End Works; before we do so, however, let us bear our testimony to the high degree of perfection to which Messrs. Townsend have brought the trade of needle-making. We are quite willing, from what we saw at the Givry Works, to believe that the firm owes its present enviable position to the energy, perseverance and ability of the senior partner and the founder of the firm, Mr. George Townsend. Almost all the beautiful machinery to be seen at the Givry Works was invented by Mr. George Townsend, senior; in point of fact, his own hands made the greater portion of it. At Hunt End they do something besides make needles: they manufacture the machinery with which the needles are made. We saw many shuttles and reels invented by Mr. Townsend, who has all an inventor's honest pride in his designs, and whose faith in all that concerns his manufactory is so great that he guarantees to make a needle, send it to London, go to the metropolis, and be measured for and receive a suit of clothes made with the same needles that were produced at Hunt End, and all in twenty-four short hours!

The sketches taken by our artist show the Works, with a portion of Mr. Townsend's dwelling-house, and the interior of the reducing-room.

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ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES.
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LOCHNAGAR WHISKY
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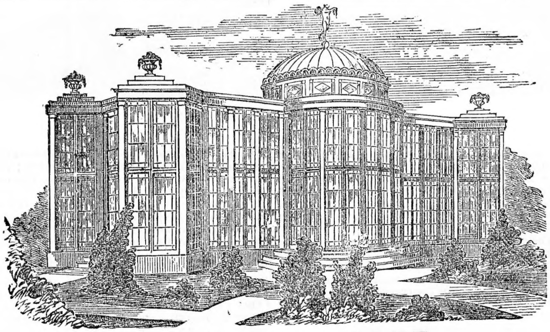

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TO ADVERTISERS.

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We were not prepared for so many claims upon our advertising space. Several columns, which are in type, are unavoidably held over. To meet this demand, and as some sort of compensation for the disappointment which certain of our customers may feel at the exclusion of their announcements in No. 1, we shall next week publish a Special Illustrated Supplement, which will be issued to the public without any extra charge.

Advertisements should be sent to the Office, 108, New Street, not later than one o'clock on Wednesdays in each week.

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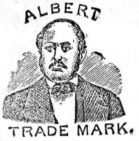

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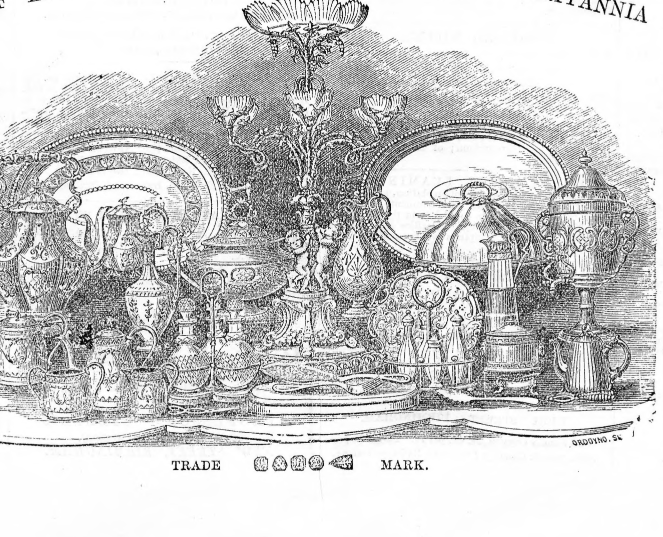

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